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# *The* Prosy Romance

By T. F. SPROUL



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# PROSY ROMANCE

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A Lady Teacher and a Rich  
Bachelor Try to Harmonize  
Their Views on Love, Logic,  
Religion and Sociology



By T. F. SPROUL  
AUTHOR AND PROPRIETOR

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## A REQUEST.

DEAR READER: The author of THE PROSY ROMANCE is asking you as a personal favor which he hopes to use for the public welfare, to send him your written opinion of this book; point out its defects as well as its effects. If it is meritorious in any way, mention it; or if you think it is not worth the time it takes to read, say so. Make commentaries on any of the radical reforms it mentions. If you think the fundamental principles of our sociological system are all right, tell about them; they may be.

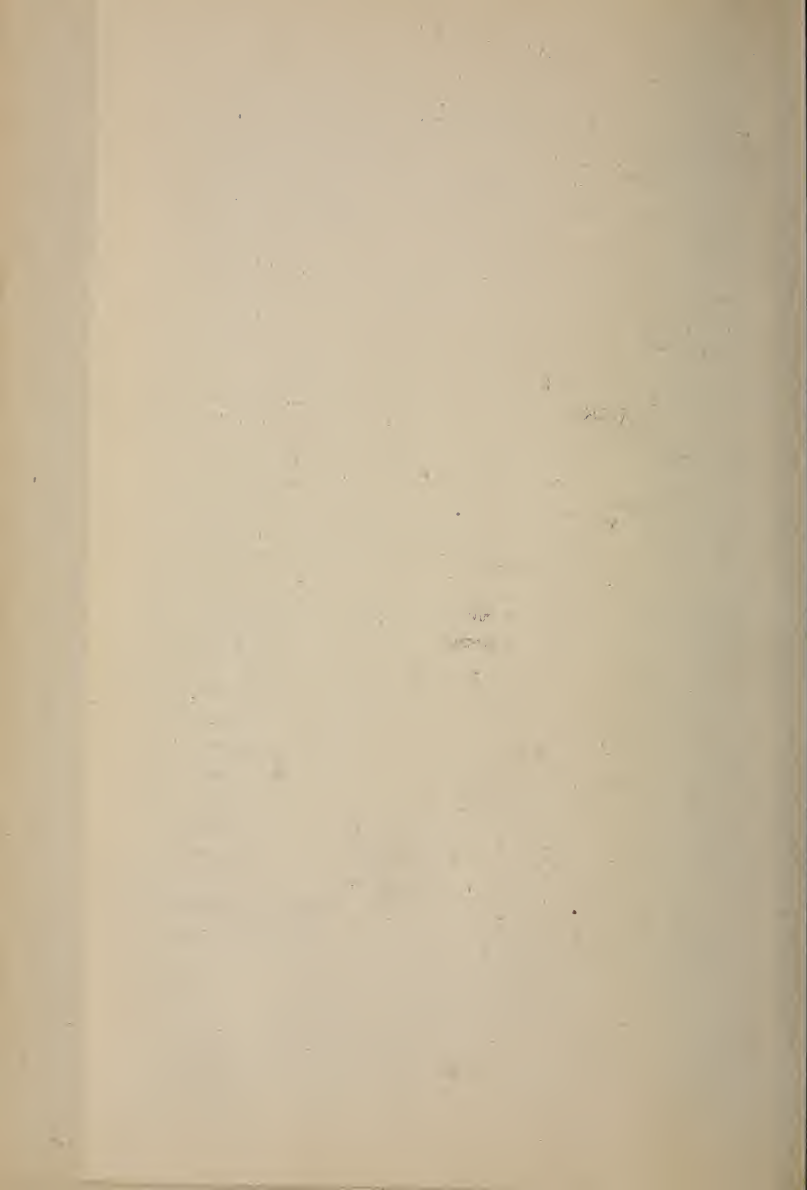
The author would like to get enough criticisms to publish a volume; he can assure you that Crane & Company can do the manufacturing as perfectly as it can be done anywhere.

We are all parts of one stupendous whole; humanity is the whole. All books are imperfect; even the divine (?) scriptures have glaring defects—some of the most vulgar passages known in print, as well as some of the most debasing falsehoods.

In considering Dash Blank, remember that a young man with 200,000 dollars at his command is generally a precarious proposition; however, there being so much time ahead of him, he may undergo a complete reformation, return to Topeka and marry the best woman in the State. Those who are not naturally bad and who have a profound respect for honesty and virtue, may become the very best and most useful citizens, even though they never profess religion or get pious; cases in proof are Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and many others; so do not condemn the book too severely until you have considered the intensity of the situation, the motive of the author and the possibilities of the future; for it is the intention to publish the sequel after the next session of the Kansas Legislature.

T. F. SPROUL,

311 East Eighth Street,  
Topeka, Kansas.



# The Prosy Romance

## I.

### THE LADY SCHOOL TEACHER HAS A MARRIAGE PROPOSITION.

"Lina, I love you. If you were my wife I believe I would be as happy as it is possible to be."

"Perhaps you do not believe it is possible for a mortal to be very happy. Remember, I am an old maid, past thirty-three, set in my convictions, loyal to my judgment; and you are six years younger, handsome in feature, domineering by nature, dignified by practice, and like attention more than you are willing to acknowledge. Besides, you are wealthy; came from an aristocratic family, and have never known the heartaches caused by poverty. You are not in sympathy with my cherished adventures. As a man you are impressive; as a moralist you are mediocre; as a statesman you would be a failure; as a husband I do not know what you would be; but I do know what you could be, or at least I think I know. But I would like to know why you love me. It is interesting, very pleasant, I can say, to know that you love me."

"I love you for many reasons: First, because you are good and honest. Second, because you are beautiful in feature and form. Third, because you are intellectual and have the courage to uphold your convictions."

"It is so pleasant to hear you say these things, but these alone without the animation and enthusiasm of love from me would not make you happy. It takes ardor to make a sweetheart; and it

takes something besides wealth and accomplishments in a suitor to make a woman happy."

"Do you wish to discourage me?"

"No, I positively do not. I like you for your candor; and I want you to be sure that you are making no mistake in the formation of your opinions. You have known me intimately for eight years. The gushing period of my womanhood has passed. I think enough of you to be serious in the consideration of everything you have to say. I never had a real lover, and you have had two sweethearts, one of whom you would have married if she had not had the misfortune of an accident. I know the circumstances through a secret source. You may not have been wholly to blame; but I want you to know that I know the mystery of the accident. A man who would take advantage of a sweet, innocent girl shall never be a husband of mine."

"Lina, you baffle me; you accuse me of a crime. I ask you to tell me all you know."

"I do not accuse you entirely and I am not believing you to be a criminal. I only say, 'A man who would take advantage of a sweet, innocent girl shall never be a husband of mine.' The time has not arrived yet for me to tell all I know; until it does I want to be your friend. I would not do you an injustice."

"You intimate that I am partly to blame for the accident. I demand an explanation, regardless of whom it may involve."

"I do not wish to say any more about the matter now. Time and developments will tell what you are; and since you are seeking my hand in marriage there are many subjects upon which I would like to know your thoughts. These subjects are of domestic, social, and political importance. Most of the hardships which the families of wage-earners and farmers on rented land have to endure can be traced to the unjust laws of unlimited land-owning. Unlimited land-owning is, always has been, and always will be the most perfect system of man-owning—slavery is a better

name for it. You own twenty quarter-sections of land in Kansas. In other words, you have a lease upon as many lives as this land will sustain. These tracts of land represent the possibility of an existence of a limited number of human beings. If it is not these identical persons who will have to pay you tribute, it is others, up to the limit which the land will sustain. You have it in your power to get a third or more, of all this mass of humanity can produce. What moral right have you to exact it? Of course you have a legal right to take a third, or more, of all these people produce. This legal right is worth more to you than a dukedom. You and your posterity, if you have any, can live for ages without work, while some of these people on your land can never enjoy the comforts of life. They are your slaves, and the law relieves you of all anxiety as to their physical welfare; in this you have advantage of the chattel slave-owner. If some of these people die or move off, others anxious for an existence will move on. Neither you, nor any of your kin, produced this wealth to which you have title. Its selling value was caused by population coming near to it by immigration and railroads. Yet you are allowed to rent it and collect a tribute which is the cause of most of the poverty of this age, and you have an income without any personal effort whatever; your fine talents are rusting out from idleness, or are expended in motoring, baseball, horse-racing and the like. If I could arouse you to the injustice of the land and tax laws of this country I would like to consider every other thought you have."

"Lina, I am not prepared for such an effusion of 'Progress and Poverty.' I did not know you were a disciple of Henry George. I judge you have been a reader of *The Appeal to Reason* too. It is yourself that interests me most. It is hard for me to consider anything so complex as seems uppermost in your mind this evening. I came to admire you and listen to topics of a domestic nature. I do not feel qualified to meet you in argument on the abstruse afflictions of society. These afflictions, I confess, have

not bothered me. I always thought I came into possession of what I own honorably. Human beings differ so widely that man-made laws cannot alleviate their personal defects. For instance, there is a Mr. Gano on one of my farms; he had nothing but two horses and a pretty young wife five years ago when he went onto that farm; now he has three children, money in bank, and property enough to buy a farm of his own. He has made me a good offer on the farm where he lives. But I do not care to sell it. It is one of the best I have. I want it for a home when I get married, and desire to go back to a life similar to that of my boyhood. I enjoy country life more than city life. To be out where the colts, the calves, the pigs, and the chickens are happy and contented; where the grass and grain are abundant; where every day is a blessing and every night a consolation,—there, where all nature appeals to the enjoyment of life, is the place to rear a family and enjoy old age. I have thought of you as a wife to help me occupy this farm; so I declined Mr. Gano's offer."

"Well, Mr. Blank—or perhaps I had as well call you Dash, as you so much desire—it is not difficult to get at your meaning. But, Dash Blank, I am not going to accept you as anything but a good friend. Not for a while anyhow. You are the first man to talk to me like this, but I am not ready to be a fiancée till I find out how you develop along the difficult lines of thought. You may have thought because I am an old maid that I am anxious to get married. I am just as anxious as a woman ought to be. But if I ever do marry I am going to know the man I marry from A to Z, etc. If there is any repenting to do I want to do it before marriage. I know bright young wives with nice healthy children, whose husbands seem to be good to them, regretting that they are married. They mope around with an injured expression and say, 'I do not have the things I want. I wish I were a sweetheart instead of a wife.' Some of them lie abed while their husbands get breakfast, when there is nothing ailing them

except laziness—if this can be called an ailment. These women live on farms, too. They do not seem to be so full of energy as the ideal you have in mind. I do not think a farm is the place to get the highest degree of enjoyment. There is too much isolation on the farm. But if I were on the farm in the capacity of a housekeeper I would not be like the woman of whom I speak. I should try to do my part. I only spoke of her case to remind you that good women sometimes lack energy in the capacity of wives. You do not seem inclined to think much about the hardships caused by the unjust distribution of the natural wealth, the land, of the country. You like to be an aristocrat. You seem to have no sympathy for the maids and youths who are the victims of the conditions of which I speak.”

“Lina, I am not unsympathetic where sympathy is deserved. It takes a certain amount of hardships and opposition, too, to develop the best traits there are in young people, and Mr. Roosevelt’s ideas of large families are good. It is not the children reared in ease and luxury, who accomplish the most in the great achievements. Because Fate placed me in affluence is no reason why I should shirk any of the requirements of a man. I intended to speak of the things which seem uppermost in your consideration of me, but in following my natural inclination everything escaped my mind except the possibilities of yourself; but if you will allow me half the talk I’ll get around in detail to your idiosyncrasy. It is going to be no easy matter to make you understand my views, and you must have patience with me in my delineations. A man cannot do his best on complicated subjects when animated by the charms of a beautiful woman with whom he has not been alone very much. If such a woman becomes his wife I believe he will, in time, become so tempered that nothing would be too intricate for him to do his best in her presence.”

“Well, I am pleased with what you say.”

“I am trying to have you pleased with all I say, and it is

going to be very hard to do if I remain entirely true to myself, though I feel I must be entirely true to myself if I be true to you. Some one has said, 'Those who have temperaments alike should not marry.' If there is any good authority for those holding opposite views marrying, I think we are qualified at least in one respect, and this conclusion leads me to take up the land and tax questions. Those governments which have upheld property rights and individualism under democratic management are most enduring. These kinds of governments tax the land and all other property in proportion to the requirements of the government; and if a man holds thousands of acres and pays the taxes assessed thereon he fills his mission as a subject of this government. Some fail to do this, and become renters. Bad luck may have been the cause in some cases, but in more cases it has been bad management, poor business capacity. I can cite you to Mr. Agee, who a few years ago inherited almost as much real estate as I did: today he is bankrupt. Much of his land is being sold for taxes. He made a poor choice of tenants. His land was occupied by a shiftless lot of farmers and the whole community suffered as a consequence. Now am I to blame if I should buy these lands and rent them to enterprising young men who will make the farms produce, enabling me to pay the taxes to build school-houses and public roads? Because I do not go into the fields and work does not signify that I am not filling my mission as a man. Head work has always commanded better returns than hand work. Because I like to ride in an automobile and attend ball games for recreation should not be placed to my discredit. Everything helpful and entertaining that human beings do should be patronized. You seem to have a morbid conclusion concerning our land and tax laws. There never was a country better equipped to give individual merit a chance to attain the highest reward. What a fine galaxy to contemplate, beginning with Lincoln as a statesman, Rockefeller as a financier, Edison as an

inventor, Hurley as a railroad manager,—throughout all the industries we have known men to climb from bottom to top by individual merit! It is not because of our laws that some persons are worthless and poverty-stricken; such persons were born without capacity to think; without inclination to work; and these kinds come more often from well-to-do parents than from the energetic laborers.

“Those who are healthy, industrious, and have capacity, can earn a competence in any vocation, and our splendid State institutions provide for the unfortunate and dangerous members of society. The more wealthy a citizen is, the more he contributes to the support of these institutions by paying taxes; so you see every one should have access to land on the same terms, paying market price and a uniform tax. I never can be in sympathy with paternalism or socialism as government propositions. Opposition is the creator of the strenuous. It is so throughout all nature. Most persons with plenty to eat and nothing to do will get fat and careless, indolent and immoral. Nature has cruel ways of disposing of surpluses, and anything man does in making laws is more humane than the laws of nature; so I conclude that it is not worth while to worry and fret because everybody is not prosperous and happy, any more than it is worth while to worry because every living thing throughout nature unmercifully feeds upon and destroys every other living thing not powerful enough to defend itself.”

“Ah, Dash, you are not as kind-hearted as I would like to see every human being be in considering the miseries traceable to man-made laws. It is not our mission to change and modify some of the laws of nature where we see pain, cruelty and death. It being possible, I would gladly help create a state of existence among animals as well as men wherein no creature would give any other creature pain or fright. To do this we must first prevent men preying upon each other as wild animals do. Last February I

remember one day when you collected \$700 in rents on farm products and on that day I visited one of my relatives from whom you received money on that day and there was destitution which made me heart-sick; little sickly children going without sufficient food and clothing in order that a landlord might have cash rent. It does not speak well of your kindness to excuse poverty and cruelty because you see it so plainly in Nature's laws. When civilization shall have advanced to its highest possibilities we will have ceased making paupers by creating millionaires; we will have enabled every worthy young man to get a home of his own where a happy family can be nourished and educated; we will have relegated poor old maids and rich old bachelors to a sense of their misspent lives; we will have made it impossible for non-residents and foreigners to purchase land for no other purpose than to pay interest on investments. You, and men in your position, favor State laws to regulate freight rates to pay interest only on the original cost of railroads and equipments. You object to the dear people having to pay interest on watered stock—falsified or bogus stock is a better name; yet you justify collecting rents on a basis from \$50 to \$100 per acre on lands that did not cost \$3 per acre. Your land is falsely capitalized for the purpose of robbing those who till the soil. Lands should have no selling value above what the improvements cost. No wonder there is a scarcity of food products; no wonder there are overpopulated cities and a scarcity of people in the country to till the lands; no wonder the country is not producing on thousands of acres held for speculation when human hogs are allowed to keep the workers away from the soil unless they, the workers, will pay interest on investments to keep a lot of social drones in the cities who spend their time on pug dogs and automobiles when they are not interested in scandals and divorce suits. I believe you will yet be convinced that unlimited land-owning is the very worst kind of slavery. If I did not think so I would dismiss you. I

must admit that I am more interested in you than I ever have been in any man who showed an inclination to give me attention as a suitor. I like your lustrous eyes, your dark wavy hair, your six-foot height and 200-pound heft. I like your knowledge of books and your manly bearing. But I object to your cigars and your reckless optimism.

"Your belief in telepathy and immortality is beyond my power to elucidate. Oh, pshaw! I've gone too far. I have opened the secret to the mystery of the poor little girl who came so near being your wife. But thanks to the plenitude of my knowledge of this mystery, I may as well tell you that I know you made the poor little girl believe in telepathy and the immortality of the soul. Sometime, Dash, I am going to reveal to you every thought and conviction I have. There is my call to come to the office. This has been a pleasant evening to me. Will you come again tomorrow evening? You are the most attentive listener with whom I talk. This telephone work is very tiresome. One has to listen to everything and obey orders."

## II.

### WRANGLING OVER BAD HABITS.

"Good-evening, Dash; glad to see you."

"I cherish all the greetings you have to offer, Lina; I think I never felt more buoyant. The thought of being alone with you this evening has taken me into a realm of happiness which has given me a new interest in every living, moving, growing thing. I know, beyond the shadow of doubt, I am more deeply in love with you than I have ever been with any woman."

"Well, you seem able to go direct to your favorite theme without preliminary. Ah, Dash, you have been stimulating with wine again. Am I to learn that you have a complete list of bad habits?"

"I do not know that the list is complete, but I am willing that you shall know every bad habit I have, and taking a little wine at regular intervals does not seem to me to be a bad habit. I was created to stint at nothing. I believe in enjoying everything good,—in moderation, of course. I do not indulge in excesses. You must not accuse me of intemperance. I never was in better shape, physically or mentally. I dwell mostly on the good and the beautiful. You are connected with my thoughts more than anything else lately. Your pretty face has been a source of pleasure to me since my automobile started for this place one hour ago. The way I sped over the nice roads was exhilarating. The influence of the Havana cigar, together with the drink of port wine which I took before starting, made my trip enjoyable, but the completion of my enjoyment I expect to have in your society."

"It seems to me, Dash, you are rather more demonstrative than is usual in advances complimentary, although I confess I do not know much about the advances of impulsive young men."

"You are too dear to me to expect any straight-laced, memorized compliments. I shall talk to you extemporaneously; a man in earnest does not need notes to compliment a woman like you; so you must not expect formality. I would like to hold your hand while I tell you how you have taken possession of my hopes and desires."

"Mr. Blank, when you win an intimacy there is time enough to be demonstrative. You had as well confine yourself to words; words which are not animated by wine nor flavored with Havanas. I hoped to bring you into a philosophical discussion on the important social and political questions of this age. I am no giddy girl yearning for compliments. I am a grown woman, with a knowledge of right and wrong which you cannot swerve.—Did you see anything startling among your tenantry today?"

"Yes, I did. I took dinner at Mrs. B.'s. She wanted me to suggest the kind of furniture her husband should buy for the new house which I have about completed on the farm near Plainville. Her husband seemed anxious, too; so we all three examined the catalogue of Carson, Pirie, Scott & Co., Chicago. I felt a little out of my element, but I was surprised to see the kind of furniture she had selected for a three-roomed house. She wanted a center table that was listed at \$48, a set of chairs at \$24, a bedstead at \$36. I did not want to pass opinion on her selection, but she insisted; so I told her I thought she was a little extravagant in her selection. Moving such furniture from place to place in rented houses would be a hardship to renters in their circumstances. She flew into a fit of anger, talked loudly and indecently; said I was like all the other men—thought a woman shouldn't have anything nice to look at—and finished by saying she was going to have them anyhow, if it took a team to buy them. I felt embarrassed, and Mr. B. looked it. Mr. B. is a nice man, but could not pay his rent in full this year, but I found out the reason why: his wife does not know any more about economy than a hen knows about

arithmetic. I saw two of the children out in the yard hauling a muddy dog in a \$15 baby wagon and a tortoise head-comb trampled into the mud. Three silver knives and two forks were in the path to the well. A silk umbrella was being made the connecting romping-stick between a seven-year-old girl and a big husky pup. The girl let loose of her end when I met them in the path, and the pup victoriously shook the umbrella like he would shake a rat. There were clothes-pins on the ground in every direction, and two rocking-chairs were in the yard; had been left out in the rain overnight. One of these had a rope fastened to the front end of the rockers, and the little girl got into the chair and asked a brother to take hold the rope and give her a ride. There was a general appearance of waste and extravagance all about the yard. No man could succeed with such a woman for a wife. I have traced the poverty here to its source. There will not be rent enough collected on this place to pay taxes, yet I am going to let this family stay. There was something in my experience today to excite the mirth of a monkey."

"Did you get excited?"

"Now I do not like to be side-tracked in that style."

"O, excuse me, please; it was impudent in me to ask that question; I did not mean any offense. What was your mirth-provoking experience?"

"I took dinner at Mrs. B.'s. Mr. B. was not at home, and I wanted to see him before I left, so she and her children and myself ate dinner together. She told me how well she had been reared, and if she had not done it I never would have found it out. She never had to do dirty work, wash, do the dishes and the like, and it did mortify her so to be married to a man who had no management or business capacity. She first apologized for the dinner, but it was more because her husband was a poor provider than from lack of skill on her part that she made the apology. At her girlhood home there was never anything but harmony in the family

management. Her mother was a society woman and her father was a business man who could buy a dish for ten cents and sell it for a dollar. 'Papa was the real thing, he was,' and she, herself, was the Belle of Hill Town. When she made her *début* all the young men in the country wanted to go with her. All this gush she gave me before her husband arrived and before we looked at the furniture catalogue. She was suddenly reminded of her twenty-five-dollar set of furs the pup had found in the yard where the children had left them, and remarked that they were the only evidences left of her refined girlhood. She then grilled Mr. B. I do not like to think of her as a wife, and it amused me greatly to think what a refined girl she must have been."

"I knew her when she was a girl, and it puzzled me that Mr. B. should choose a girl like she was when there were so many sensible, good-looking girls in his neighborhood. Girls, too, who had been raised on a farm. She was always extravagant. She one time bought a pair of spectacles, trimmed in gold, paying \$20 for them. That was about the time she got her expensive furs. Gaudy? Well, she was a perfect personification of tinsel gaudiness. But she is not to blame. She is one of the many ridiculous products of excessive wealth. Her father was a grafter and her mother a society woman who doted on \$40 hats, diamond rings, and \$100 gowns; who never gave a thought to the earning or purchasing value of a dollar. She believed her mission, if she ever gave the matter any thought at all, was to dress and entertain. She was what was considered a fortunate woman, married a rich man who traveled and had a fine income. He had inherited great wealth, and married this girl because of her pretty face and form, and lavished his wealth on her every desire. She may have been naturally weak along practical lines of thought, but I believe if she had had responsibilities and hardships to contend with she would have raised a better girl. The mother is trying to pose as one high-born and the girl is hindered as a wife and mother by the

luxurious extravagance under which she grew to womanhood. That husband of hers must be weak in management. But why do you keep a renter who is so shiftless?"

"I'm doing it just as an experiment, and to convince you that you are wrong in contending that the poverty on rented farms is traceable to an unjust system of land tenure. Will you take a ride in my new automobile? It will only take two hours to see many of my fine farms. I hope the day is not far off when I can say our farms."

"Yes, I'll go with you to see your farms. You are a puzzle to me, Dash. There are so many bright, vivacious, pretty, young girls here in this place, most of whom would be glad to go with you anywhere, and here you are insisting on an old maid being your life companion. Why are you so unlike other men?"

"For the same reason that you are unlike other women. The woman I seek for a wife knows how to preserve her health and strength. She does not patronize the ridiculous fads of fashion. Her desire to be good is greater than her desire to be popular. She knows the weaknesses of her sex well enough to avoid the pain and misery resulting therefrom; and above all else she is kind-hearted and generous, well qualified to be a wife and mother, and possessing mental powers which will keep any good man in the narrow path of rectitude."

"You seem most complimentary when you are smoking. I would rather see you perfectly moral than to hear the nice things you say about me. I have come to think so much about you lately, Dash, that I am restless and uneasy, fearing that I may not act wisely. If I could get you to quit using wine and tobacco I believe the other reformatations I desire would come as a consequence of these bad habits being abandoned. My observation of men has taught me that intoxicants and tobacco are injurious to the moral, mental, and physical welfare of the race. You speak of my being generous: I am not and never shall be generous

enough to marry a man addicted to these bad habits. Think of what happened in Topeka not long ago. Mrs. Boyer shot and instantly killed by a man under the influence of liquor, who was seeking her hand in marriage. It is not my desire to commence a long lecture, but it is my desire to have you know that I am not generous enough to bad habits to marry them, be they ever so perfectly wrapped up in the person of a wealthy, intelligent, influential, popular man. Prohibition in Kansas was the greatest blessing that ever came to the State, and if tobacco were put under the prohibitive laws the next greatest blessing could be accomplished. The high price and scarcity of human food would be solved in a great measure if these awful habits were forced out of our civilization. I shall not exact any promises from you. A promise is a weak thing compared with a conviction, and if I cannot convince you that these habits are wrong, I shall not ask you to quit them."

"Lina, you never used tobacco nor drank wine; your observation upon which you base your conclusions is confined to a few cases where the temperaments of the individuals may have been the cause of the awful deeds. There is so much to consider when we go to tracing the cause of crimes. I might say that Thomas Edison, the greatest inventor of this age, was kept in a tranquil state of mind by keeping a chew of tobacco in his mouth while inventing the telephone, and make as good a point for the use of tobacco as you made against liquor in referring to the murder in Topeka. I might also refer you to Victor Murdock or Uncle Joe Cannon as having been powerful in legislative halls because they were addicted to these popular habits which you call bad habits. I am not ready to admit that prohibition of the use of liquor and tobacco would be panaceas for social and political diseases. Some of the ablest statesmen have used both. I use tobacco as a means of enjoyment. A kind of tranquil feeling comes to me when I am in good health from using it in both forms.

When I am sick I have no desire to use it or anything else. As to wine, I have divine authority for using it. Refer to the scriptures: Judges ix, 13; Deut. xiv, 26; Gen. xlix, 11; Ps. civ, 15."

"Ah, Dash, you make a smooth argument for these modern curses, but intuitively I feel that you are wrong. However, we will drop the matter for the present and take the automobile ride. Ed. Howe, the editor of the *Atchison Globe*, says an old maid is never satisfied till she becomes reconciled. I am satisfied to be a 'spin,' as Mr. Howe defines her, rather than violate conclusions of morality. You have some traits I admire. Your honesty makes you worthy of my friendship."

"I infer, then, that my morality, without considering my honesty, would not hold you as a friend, eh?"

"Be calm, Dash; I do not want to offend you. Your morality alone would not secure me as a companion to ride with you over your fine estates. It is because I believe it possible that you may come to look upon morality and social economy with more enlightened views that I desire to retain your friendship."

"Miss Lina Gona, I cannot believe that you are beating back my advances as a suitor because of my weakness in using tobacco and wine. There must be something else. Something connected with the death of that dear little girl whose body lies mouldering in yonder cemetery. I have a letter written one week before she died, the contents of which would surprise you. It would prove to you that I am not guilty of anything you may suspect. In this letter I am requested never to reveal its contents, and but for one reason I would have destroyed it long ago. You, no doubt, were honest when you hinted that you were posted on talk secretly circulated among relatives at the time of her death. No one dared to make the accusation. From you, and you only, did I ever hear anything direct. Do you want me to show you this letter which I promised by a reply to the letter soon afterwards, never to reveal?

I have it in a private drawer in the bank. If I had not known that you suspected me I would have destroyed it."

"No, Dash, I do not want you to break any promises to prove to me that you are a moral man in the case of that unfortunate girl. She being my niece, of course made you think there was a possibility of the case being investigated by a prosecution. I am glad to know that you are prepared to prove your honor. I never could believe to my entire satisfaction that you were immoral, mean and dishonest along that line of action. It is only your personal habits in regard to wine and tobacco that I had reference to in today's talk. If I were your wife, or expected to be, I should want to see that letter. Something more startling than has yet been discovered will have to come up before I could believe you harmed little Allit."

"I feel better since you have been more explicit. I think you are in search of an ideal for a husband which will be hard to find. I have noticed that men who have no bad habits are poor, sickly, weak, over-pious, effeminate specimens who do not do much in the manly walks of life. I think your ideal man is a missionary."

"I think it very ungenteel in you to try to belittle missionaries. 'Manly walks of life,' indeed! There are Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Bryan, who do not have these bad habits. You surely cannot say that either of these are weak, poor, over-pious, effeminate specimens who do not do much in the manly walks of life. Be candid, now."

"Ah, well, hang it all! I shall not say anything detrimental to Roosevelt except his use of the word disinterested, in his American Ideals. I think he is about as near perfection as a man can be—judging, of course, from what I have read and heard. I confess I did not think of him when I made the sweeping assertion. But really, does neither he nor Bryan use tobacco? I've heard his daughter does."

"If either of them uses tobacco I never heard of it."

"Guess you are running a bluff on me. I do not see how Roosevelt could have been so popular among the cowboys and rough riders and be free from those habits. I got the impression somewhere—think maybe it was from reading memoirs of Andrew Jackson, who smoked a cob pipe—that to be a Democrat in good standing was to smoke, drink, chew and be willing to fight on small provocation. I'm willing to admit that I am not versed on the habits of presidents and preachers, having never associated with them, but I have known preachers to indulge in these habits. Maybe, though, they were not the kind out of which good missionaries are made. I would like to know exactly what kind of a man you want for a husband. I do not believe the Ideal you are looking for is in the Republican or Democratic parties. Perhaps he is a Socialist?"

"No, sir, he is not a Socialist, though I must confess I do not know anything about Socialists."

"Oh, now I have it. He is a Prohibitionist."

"Yes, he will have to be a Prohibitionist; but that is not all he will have to be. Some of Roosevelt's qualities, some of Bryan's qualities, some of your qualities, too, he will have. You are honest enough, cheerful enough, large enough, generous enough, healthy enough, handsome enough, wealthy enough,—yes, too wealthy, but you have not developed or acquired the moral habits that I admire, and until you do you'll never be a husband of mine. I am very cheerful about the kind of man I want, but I have never seen him yet. I am not like a silly girl in her teens claiming she does not want a man, when she knows very well she desires a good, worthy man more than anything else. I was once a silly girl in her teens; so speak from experience as well as observation on this theme.—We had better go for that ride, Dash, and drop this habitual wrangling, for I expect this will be the last ride or 'joy trip' as some call it, that we will take together this fall."

"Why, what's up now? Why are you going to cut out the joy

trips? I have been looking forward to these as chief sources of pleasure. If you knew how dear you were to me at times you would not be so indifferent; maybe you would reconsider."

"'At times'! Now a new query has come into my imagination. If you had said 'at all times' I would have been more impressed with the quality of your devotion, which, I am now convinced, requires a very thorough analysis. You may discover, too, some day, that there is more pleasure in pursuit than possession. I am not intending to avoid you or entirely desert you, Dash, but have made up my mind to spend the winter in Topeka. I have friends there who have promised me lucrative employment."

"Lina, you can spring more surprises upon a fellow than any one I have known. Would you mind telling me what kind of employment? Surely you have not secured a political pull on the pay-rolls of the State?"

"I have not decided yet just what I shall do, but I am quite sure whatever I do will be respectable. This is in reply to your mild insinuation about a political pull. There is nothing more honorable than good service on the pay-rolls of the State, regardless of any opinion Mr. Dash Blank may have."

"Well, I may as well tell you that I am really sorry you intend leaving here. I shall be lonesome, Lina, very lonesome. There is no one among my many lady friends here who can entertain me like you can. Would you be willing to stay if I gave up my bad habits?"

"No, Dash, I do not ask you to make any sacrifice for me. I am making none for you. If you did anything of the kind it would be in the nature of a promise, not from conviction. If I cannot convince you that these habits are wrong you will never succeed in quitting them. You need to be lonesome, Dash, very lonesome; it may develop you into a perfect man. I'll correspond with you. Your letters, I'm sure, will be very interesting. Be-

sides, absence may lead to endearment. I must admit I am about half in love with you. I'm getting impatient for that ride."

"If this is to be the last ride I shall have with you this fall, I would like to make it a long one. I would enjoy being out at least half the night, the weather is so perfect—a full moon and just cool enough to be pleasant.

"A new thought has come into my mind. I want you to name my new automobile; give it one short and sweet like your own. I think Lina Gona is about the prettiest name I ever heard; still, it is not suitable for an automobile. The name need only be known to you and me, limited to our correspondence, in which I expect to be greatly enthused. Name it something easy to write and easy to spell."

"How would 'It' do, with a capital I?"

"You couldn't have done better if you had taken a month, for it is really 'It.' How well you have done in this naming business. If ever I should have anything else to name I am going to apply to you. Remember this, will you?"

"I surely shall."

"Dear Lina, I am aware that I shall have to study man and his relations to society more closely and thoroughly than I ever thought of doing if I expect to retain your good-will. I see plainly a courtship can be maintained with you only as a sacred business proposition, in which you propose to analyze every action and its motive. You have impressed me more seriously on this subject than I was aware of before you talked of going to Topeka to spend the winter. You will probably go into high society there and drop me altogether because I am not polished in manners and matters of dress and address."

"No, Dash, I am not going to Topeka with the expectation of entering into what you term high society. I do not believe men are any better in high society toward the women with whom they form attachments than men are in what you might wrongfully call

low society. That society where virtue, kindness, gentleness, in short, where a high standard of morality is cherished, is the best society. It may be, and often is, where poverty prevails. However, I am glad to see you so serious on this subject. Life and all the mysterious connections which tend to make us regard each other with a deep feeling of respect, move us to make the highest kind of resolutions. I have resolved to give you every chance and plenty of time to prove what you are. I think a woman is foolish who marries a man to make him good. I have seen enough of that kind of foolishness to convince me that most of the divorces are traceable to such marriages.—But say, are we never going to take that ride?"

"Sure! Now, It may surprise you by proving itself an Ideal—searching for ideals being one of your fads. I'm sure it is competent for the occasion of showing an Ideal Woman how to enjoy an Ideal Ride. I am trying to give you a Capital Compliment, suitable to your Capital Conclusion of choosing the Capital City in which to enjoy yourself a few months."

"I am not an idealist, though I get some genuine pleasure from my imagination, and I think you have a mistaken idea of the meaning of the word ideal. Those things of which you speak are all real, not ideal. If you had used the word perfect, perhaps you would have come nearer saying what you meant, but I am not a perfect woman."

### III.

#### SEARCHING THE CAPITAL.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, Nov. 6, 1910.

MR. DASH BLANK: I am going to omit the *Dear Sir* after this, because of its formality. I desire to be informally friendly with you as long as I live. I expect you will occupy my thoughts as much as any other person as long as I remain in Topeka. I have secured a room in the western part of Topeka, about half-way between the Governor's Mansion and the Capitol Building, where I can have just such seclusion as I desire, having access to the public libraries, and can have the full enjoyment of this splendid modern civilization. Here is what Ruby Kirt McLean has to say in the *Daily Capital*: "For many years Kansas has enjoyed comparative cleanliness of politics, due to the absence of the saloon vote. Herds of men voting for the lowest and worst form of government are unknown in the Sunflower State. No longer is the saloon a factor in the development and growth of cities in Kansas. What have been the results of prohibition in Kansas? The direct and immediate ravages committed by the saloon as a social sore are unknown to our people. No city in the Union the size of Topeka, unless it is having an evanescent boom, is growing more rapidly or substantially than Topeka. More actual building is going on here than in Kansas City, Mo., and the Capital City is fast becoming the great convention city of the West. A prohibition State surrounded by non-prohibition States, it has gained more in population than any State adjoining it. In ten years Kansas has increased her wealth more than a billion dollars. Tax-rolls show a greater wealth per capita in Kansas than any other State. Employers of large forces of labor, such as the Santa

Fe Railway, state that better results are obtained from employees in Kansas than from any other section of the country.

Yesterday being one of the most beautiful days I have ever known—possibly it was because I thought of your being in love with me made it so beautiful—I concluded it was a good time to climb to the top of the dome on the Capitol Building. When looking out over this splendid city, I thought of you wondering if I were going to Topeka to get into high society. There were several ladies and gentlemen in the balcony of the dome, who were there when I arrived. I assure you I went up alone; however, I entered into the very highest society possible. These people were sociable and friendly, like all the Topekans with whom I have become acquainted. I became unusually happy.

The Washburn College and all the important, magnificent buildings were shown to me, pointed out separately. I am already more in love with Topeka than all your farms in western Kansas.

The new *Topeka Daily Capital* building, east from the northeast corner of the State Capitol grounds, is really the prettiest thing in sight. I was taken through all the departments of this marvelous printing plant, which Arthur Capper has about completed, by an old gentleman whom the management furnishes especially to show visitors through, for a stranger would get lost and not know how to get out.

Mr. Capper has put in a new \$30,000 printing-press. These are the publications known as the Capper Publications: *Farmers Mail and Breeze*, *Topeka Daily Capital*, *Kansas Weekly Capital*, *Missouri Valley Farmer*, *Nebraska Farm Journal*, and *The Household*.

While looking out over this most beautiful of Kansas cities, I had an exquisite sense of the greatness of Kansas and her people. It seems to me there is a chance to get very near perfection in civil government, having this splendor as a central incentive. What splendid enthusiasm would go abroad over the State if

every school boy and girl could visit this Capitol Building, examine its contents, and admire its architecture. It must be seen to be appreciated. The State Library in the third story and the Historical Library in the fifth story are as completely arranged and orderly conducted as can be, and this can also be truthfully said of all the departments so far as I have examined.

My time is so fully taken up with realities that my mind has had but little to do with idealities. I feel a strong spirituality or Soul Force insisting that I devote my life to literature. There are so many social and civil questions which our reëlected governor is trying to introduce to the newly elected legislators; and none of these questions are so important as trying to regulate freight rates, which, if limited by legislation so that only a low rate of interest on the "physical valuation" of railroads can be realized, it will suggest that the incomes on other industries, and especially rents on farms, be regulated by law, so that a farmer shall realize according to a physical valuation of his farm.

If a land-owner were limited by law to asking only one-fourth of the products of his farms upon which he collects rent, the physical valuation of land would be reduced to correspond with this limitation. There would be nothing unjust about this. The farm land in Kansas is not worth from fifty to one hundred dollars per acre because it took that much money per acre to produce it. Farms are more falsely capitalized than railroads. The original cost of a farm is no more than the amount of money it cost to break the land and build improvements upon it. Everything above this is speculation value. This speculation value is what makes food products so high. Men are being forced into the cities because they cannot pay this monopoly value placed upon farm land by this unjust speculative process.

Governor Stubbs surely has the insight and the political power to do more for this country than any man living. Here is what he said the day after his last election :

"I would rather be elected Governor of Kansas by ten or twelve thousand majority in the face of a desperate fight from the railroads, brewery agents, ex-jointists, stand-pat Republicans, their allies and emissaries, than to have been elected by one hundred thousand majority and had the support of all these interests on a compromise basis. I regard the victory in Kansas, under all the circumstances, as a great triumph for progressive Republicanism. I expect to continue the management of the State institutions and the public business of this State along exactly the same lines that have been pursued during the last two years, and do not know of any material changes that will be made in my policies. I am thankful beyond expression to the voters who have stood so loyally beside me in this great fight for a better government, and promise that all the energy and strength of my life will be used in promoting the welfare and protecting the rights and interests of all the people of this commonwealth."

You see, Dash, we have a governor who has the welfare of the people at heart as much as did Lincoln fifty years ago. I see by the county paper out there that you have bought several thousand more acres of land in Nebraska and Texas. Why will you be so greedy in monopolizing? Why did you not use that money in improving the farm you already owned so that your tenants could have more of the comforts of life? As sure as the sun shines there is a time coming when your income on these farms will be limited to physical valuation or first cost. You told me your uncle bought most of the land you inherited at four dollars per acre. Six per cent. interest on four dollars is twenty-four cents per year for each acre. That is all you are entitled to, according to the policies which are going to be tried on railroad rates. All the rent you get above twenty-four cents per acre is taken by law from the poor farmers who either have to tend your farms, work for wages, or let their families starve.

A good life, lived with a purpose of benefitting all mankind, is the grandest masterpiece in the religious sphere. I would like to see you become deeply religious. What I mean by deeply religious is that you would appeal to your conscience, the essence of good which is within you, when you have such vast business opportunities upon which to apply your financial skill. I do not mean that you should build churches and make long prayers, nor be a Sunday School superintendent, or anything along that line. The God, or the personified goodness, within your own being is what you need to worship. Material achievements, getting money and land,—without spiritual guidance, appealing to that sense of right and wrong,—have been the ruin of many a capable man.

If you were as good in soul actions as you are in business transactions, if you were as anxious to be righteous as to be rich in worldly goods, and if your personal habits were freed from tobacco and wine, I think you would make a model husband, a perfect man. I am a good deal more interested in *your* dual existence that I have ever been in any other man's dualism.

I hope I have made it clear to you that I am wanting to love you, and hoping that I may influence you to a perfect discernment of good and bad laws, good and bad habits, and good and bad achievements.

If you could know the anxiety and suffering the first settlers of that country had to endure, you would be a more sympathetic man. When I was a young girl about ten or twelve years old, I was deeply impressed with the hardships we all had to bear. One time about three o'clock in the afternoon I went out into the sun-burnt cornfields to take water to my brothers, who still had hopes of getting a crop. The hot winds had been blowing for several days; perspiration had caused the fine dust to settle all over their faces; they looked sad and weary, but greeted me kindly; there was no crop raised the year before, consequently their horses were

poor and weak, having had no grain for several days. The situation and the prospect caused such a sadness to come over me that I could not talk without crying. My oldest brother knew it was my sympathy for the horses and brothers that made me so grieved; so, handing me the water-jug, he said: "Better go back to the house, little girlie; it is too hot and dirty out here for you." I shall never forget that trip back to the house. My dirty little brown feet were sore from having no shoes to wear, and tender because hot dust and last year's sandburs were prevalent everywhere. There had not been rain enough to sprout all the sandburs since the weather had gotten warm enough to make them grow. On arriving at the house, another picture of despondency was in view. My poor old mother was sitting in the shade of the sod house scraping some new potatoes no larger than marbles, hoping to get a nice supper for her dear children. Her calico dress was in shreds, but it was clean. "Better lie down and rest, Lina dear, as soon as you water the chickens,—you look so tired." After saying this her poor old wrinkled face again showed the anxiety she had for her children, live stock, and crops.

The dear pretty little chickens as they came to meet me from every direction, eager for fresh water, turned my mind from the sadness which had been such a burden. But alas! there were not more than two quarts of kaffir-corn between them and starvation.

From the barnyard I went back to the house. My mother had rearranged the things in the two-roomed house. My nice, clean little bed had been placed near the window where the wind was making a subdued noise on the wire screen. This musical sadness soon lulled me to sleep. Sleep, O blessed state of forgetfulness where troubled minds get new strength! It seemed but a few moments, though it was hours afterward, when my dear mother's voice awoke me with "Lina dear, take Taxy now and drive in the cows, and I'll help you milk after supper. Your brothers are going to take the spare team and go to town after

chicken feed and groceries." Taxy was a playful young puppy not more than four months old at that time, and he, two calves and a little colt were the happiest things on the place. The wind had ceased some, and the dreadful hot sunshine had given up to a warm steady wind. The sleep had refreshed me so much that life in the phase of a full moon seemed to be full of blessings.

I had not gone far along the cow-path when Taxy became playfully impatient because of my slowness. He was ahead in the path, and several times had whirled round and round trying to catch his tail. Seemingly he knew this was enjoyment for me, for every little while he would return, barking, and playfully grab at my striped duck dress. I thought this was the prettiest dress mother had ever made, and on former trips of this kind he had taken the skirt into his mouth and swung back with pretentious anger, growled as though he was in mortal combat with something dangerous. I had given him a trouncing for acting this way, and he was careful not to go too far in his attacks. I was very happy for a little while. On the trip back, when the cows were switching their tails and swinging their heads to their sides, trying in vain to get relief from the annoyance of flies, I noticed how gaunt and tired they seemed. The grass was so short they could not get enough even by working hard all day. Then I thought of the poor little calves, how impatient and hungry they would be if their milk rations would have to be reduced in order to get milk enough for Taxy, myself and my brothers. I concluded I would drink water the next day, so Taxy and the calves could have as much as usual. Taxy was tired, and his little red tongue lolled out. He had not taken care of his strength as he should, while attending to the stock business like men do.

I remember Mother and I did the milking after supper when the flies had ceased to annoy and after the boys had started to town. We had separated the milk, Taxy and the calves had been satisfied. We had cleaned up the milk vessels and the separator

and taken chairs out into the moonshine. Taxy had discovered the noise of a cricket in the weeds, and was trying hard to get me interested in the fun he was having; and he was succeeding, too, when Mother said, in a tone sad and sacred, "Well Lina, what do you think about us having to live alone again next winter if the boys should have to go away to work again?"

A lump of emotion, abstract though it was, came into my throat. I could not speak, but I remembered the last winter and how trying it was on me to help Mother do the chores and go a mile to school, and how the horses and cattle suffered with cold and hunger. I could see that Mother regretted having given utterance to her fears. She said, "Let us not think of it; maybe it will rain in a few days"; but it did not rain in time to save the crop.

Now, Dash, what I am trying to impress upon you is the hardships the people all over that western country had to bear, and many of them had to sell their homes or mortgage them. This gave the speculators a chance to buy those lands at four dollars per acre. I judge you are taking advantage of the same kind of hardships which the pioneers of those localities, where you have been buying more land, have had to bear.

Another niece of mine is going to teach school in your locality. She will be a stranger to the people there. I hope you will see her and show her the same gallantry you showed me when I taught. She is only eighteen, and I feel that she will interest you to the point of being a rival of mine. My observation has been that men generally shift around a good deal in love affairs. Her name is Vina Vintage. She is a brunette.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Your sincere friend,  
LINA GONA.

#### IV.

### ABSENT TREATMENT.

DEAR MISS GONA: I feel just as informal as you when you wrote your "*Searching the Capital*." I surely hope for an eternal friendship with you. I did hope for a chance to dwell on those topics, through a correspondence, in which the tenderest sentiments lovers can have would be spread out on clean white paper in beautiful words. I tried to give you absent treatment by telepathy, but "wireless" did not seem to work; at any rate, the thoughts I tried to suggest in your first letter—or rather essay—to me did not show up.

For a few days after you left, the ideal love light in your pretty eyes that moonlight night caused such a happiness that I really neglected my business. Your trend of thought, while altogether womanly for one of your age, is wanting in a sweetheart's dream.

Why did you not describe the Governor's Mansion?—for I have an ambition to occupy it some day.

Who is Ruby Kirk McLean? Did she ever lecture in Norton on woman's suffrage?

I have no fight to make against prohibition, but I see plenty of evidence of the law not being enforced. The law was enacted long before I became a voter, and I was trained up to believe it was right, but since it has been agitated so much in the last campaign, I can see that it does interfere with the personal liberty which our constitution guarantees.

I'm glad you like Topeka so well. I never expected you to be in love with my farms. I do not believe you are much in love with anything in its sentimental sense. The love you have springs from your goodness of heart and does not center on single indi-

viduals, especially not on any one man. What I mean is that you have never known the strong, enduring love of a sweetheart. You are good, in fact better than most people, but, as Dodd Gaston would express it, you are "lopsided." You are out of the ordinary. I like you as a friend. I loved you passionately when you were out here. I would have married you and considered it the most sensible thing I ever did in my life. You have said enough to convince me that you consider yourself above me morally, and I agree with you. If there is a heaven you will surely get there.

You are not practical in political questions and you do not understand the ways of politicians. Regulating freight rates was an election scheme to get the offices; so the Democrats think. Maybe Arthur Capper, Tom McNeal, Dodd Gaston, William Allen White, Governor Stubbs, Victor Murdock and all the rest of the progressives, aggressives and insurgents, really intend to do something about it; but more than likely it is political buncombe. Anyhow, that is what Old Ed Howe thinks about it.

Talk about regulating rents on farms. Here is where you are lopsided. You might as well talk about regulating sunshine. Lina, dear friend, do not let these wild theories get abroad; the insane accommodations are in Topeka. You do not seem to know that farms have all grades of fertility, and a farm with practical improvements, one which has had a good system of conservation (I am for Pinchot) practiced upon it, has twice the rental value that another adjoining farm which has been neglected. You mildly upbraided me for buying more land instead of improving what I already had. In this perhaps your ideas were not so bad. I felt a little guilty till I considered it thoroughly, after which I convinced myself I had acted wisely. Some other fellow would have bought it, and buying it did not cramp me financially. I have enough means at hand to improve all my farms in this immediate locality. And I am going to build a modern house and a

good barn on several of them and put in a private telephone system connecting all of them, so the renters will not be so isolated. I am going to do this as an experiment next year. And if it proves a success as an investment I'll know what to do with all my farms. Of course I can rent these improved farms for more than the others, for the renters on these improved farms can save their grain better and handle their stock more economically. One of my tenants said he would rather give one-half rent and have a good house and barn so he could take care of what he raised.

You speak about farms being falsely capitalized. You might as well contend that a suit of clothes is falsely capitalized because it is worth more than the cloth from which it was made or because more clothes were in demand. Every bit of labor added, every improvement made and every increase in demand for land because of a scarcity of food products are the direct causes of increasing land values. I can cite you to a good many cases where wet, marshy land was of no use to a large population near by till capital under management of some skillful financier bought it, drained it and put it under a wise system of cultivation, making it worth hundreds of dollars per acre. Now in a case of this kind surely you will not claim the landlord is a grafter; surely you will not claim it has been falsely capitalized; and its physical valuation now is rightly determined by the rent it is worth since it is put in competition with other lands. Land is *now* rented and taxed according to its physical value. The illustration I made on marsh land is also applicable to dry lands, where irrigation is applied instead of drainage. As to the dry lands of western Kansas, Texas, and Nebraska, a buyer puts up his money and runs a risk like he does when he gets married—maybe it's a success and maybe it isn't. It was so dry in some places out here last year that the whole crop would not pay the taxes; and here is where the owner steps in and serves the State by paying the taxes. The State's rights, the welfare of the whole people, are superior to the

individual rights, because the State upholds the individual in his rights.

Of course that remembrance of your childhood was pathetic. It was one of the many things which made you the noble woman you are. However, I am not only convinced that it is my legal right, but it is also a moral duty to use both capital and management to make this country produce all it will.

I like to see things move, and the faster they move within the bounds of safety the better I am pleased. I was referred to by the *New Era*, Hill City, Kansas, as going so fast when driving my auto in a circle that I could "reach out behind and give myself a chew of tobacco."

I am trying to live a good life, but I do not believe I'll ever get so good as to not enjoy a good cigar; nevertheless I am going to quit using tobacco in the presence of women who dislike it. I know I'll never make a model husband and a perfect man from your point of view.

"Dualism" is a new ism to me. On first thought it occurred to me you meant marriage, but I soon perceived you had reference to some kind of higher life or soul knowledge, God within man, or something of the kind. I'm not interested in such. But I am interested in that niece of yours. We are quite well acquainted; have taken several auto rides together; told her about the name you gave my auto, but she did not seem to approve it, so I have dropped it. I'm inclined to want to please her. She is so young, more pliant and more responsive to my advances than you. She can blush and cry. I really believe you went to Topeka to get rid of me more than you went there to become a literatus; and your communication, "Searching the Capital," informed me so skillfully, so respectfully and so completely that you still hold the highest regard I have as an intimate friend and confidant. It's awfully easy for me to love a pretty, young woman; now I've told you enough to give your imagination full sway in regard to

my hopeful relations with Vina Vintage, one of the prettiest names I have ever known.

Yours with highest regard,

DASH BLANK.

## V.

### RESISTING THE WORLDLY.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, November, 1910.

DEAR MR. BLANK: There was the usual recklessness in your Absent Treatment that I've always noticed in your talking. Your endeavor to compliment my eyes was a fair sample of a futile effort given by a worldly man to impress an old maid who had sense enough to read this Wireless Telepathy between the lines: "It will do her good and I won't miss it; it's cheap." Mr. Howe would call it "funny foolishness."

If I had known you were ambitious to occupy the Governor's Mansion I surely would have told you where it was. It is about eight blocks west of the northwest corner of the Capitol grounds, on the south side of West Eighth Avenue. The ground occupied by the Mansion and outbuildings is about ten rods wide and twenty-five rods long; it's on the south side of the Avenue; it fronts to the east and north, and a row of elm trees is in the center of the Avenue directly north of the Mansion, and nowhere else on this Avenue are there any trees in the center of the street. It is a large brick building and the barn is west of it. I shall not try to tell you how it looks inside, for it's not likely you will ever occupy it. I hope your boyish vanity will be satisfied with this. When I passed the building today at noon the Governor was trying to pacify a dog which he had chained in the back yard. They say this dog has been awfully cross ever since the election. Maybe some of the political curs have been giving him absent treatment. Yesterday's *Atchison Globe* says Stubbs and Roosevelt have got the big-head. The Governor retorts in today's *Daily Capital* that his enemies help him more than his friends. They all seem to be giving him absent treatment.

Ruby Kirk McLean is just a nice young unmarried woman. She is not "lopsided," nor does she lecture. I notice you always take special notice whenever a woman's name is mentioned. In this respect you are a little "lopsided."

I knew Dodd Gaston would suit you; for this reason I sent you the *Daily Capital*. You men all have such funny musings. Ruth Cameron had the pleasure of seeing a little girl give a horse a lump of sugar, and Dodd was so jealous he suggested feeding "Ruthie" mush.

Dash, you had better save your flattery for younger women. If I had married you the bright matrimonial prospects you now have would have failed to appear. I do not wonder that you wrote so cheerfully.

Here in Topeka we have a whistle at the ice plant that sounds like what I imagine a wail of a wandering soul in Dante's inferno sounds.

When I came to that part of your letter where you alluded to my sanity, I really felt insulted. You are so short-sighted you fail to exercise ordinary judgment. It is just as proper for the State to regulate incomes in one industry as it is in another. You know very well that there is a legal rate of interest established, and a penalty for usury. Now if it is just—and it is—to regulate freight rates, interest rates, salaries, and all incomes of those who work for county and State, why should not the rich land-owner be placed under the same regulations?

You thought you made a point when you compared a well-improved farm to one which had been neglected. There would be an incentive for the owner of a poor farm to improve it if rents were regulated by law. Mr. McNeal, the Editor of the *Mail and Breeze*, has several times suggested graduated land taxes, making assessments on such a system as would have a tendency to destroy land monopoly. If the land is to be made to produce to its fullest capacity, the State must regulate rents in such a way that men

will not buy land for any other purpose than to make it produce to its fullest capacity, in such a way that they will only purchase it to apply their labor and make homes.

There is no kind of graft so destructive to the rising generation as these real-estate frauds. In all the big cities and in nearly all the small villages there are great big fat frauds, social drones, who never do a productive day's work, dealing in real estate, falsely capitalizing the farms, booming the country, getting land values so high that young men can get a chance to tend the land only through a rental system by which these drones absorb everything above a mere living. It is hoped that Governor Stubbs and Colonel Roosevelt are broad-gauged and level-headed enough to make an attack on this iniquitous land system while they are in the business of going after grafts.

I can see through the flimsy scheme upon which you have decided to improve your farms. You are calculating to take half of all that is produced as rent. Your generosity in having your renters comfortably housed and well provided for with barns, etc., is all based on getting a larger return for increased investments.

In comparing a falsely capitalized farm to a suit of clothes you have a very meager comprehension of the propositions. The land is a gift from God; it did not cost any human effort to make it. The cloth from which a suit of clothes is made is a product of labor; its value is based upon labor, and so is the suit of clothes. To the extent your farms are improved they are justly capitalized. Those of your farms which have no improvements in the way of buildings, even though your deeds show a consideration of ten dollars per acre—they are unjust holdings, just as much as "watered stocks" in railroad holdings are a false, unjust basis upon which to estimate freight rates; so I contend if there is any justice whatever in demanding State regulation of railroad rates, there is an equal justice in demanding laws to regulate farm rents.

You made a stronger comparison when you presented the wet

marsh land. The capitalist's right in this marsh-land case should be estimated by the amount of dollars it took per acre to drain it; all above this amount really belongs to the State, the whole people; and the rent which the owner of such land should be allowed to collect should be reckoned at a six per cent. per annum interest on the drainage cost.

You take pride in your automobile because you can afford the nicest one in that country. Your little buzz-wagon would not be noticed in Topeka—there are so many so much finer than yours. This auto craze is going to have bad effects on the people. Poor, puny, sickly women who ought to be exercising themselves by a good vigorous walk, go gliding through these smooth, clean avenues in their autos, looking like ghosts. The young women who work in the offices, stores, factories, and laundries, and who get out on the nice walks bordering these avenues and exercise themselves, are physically, mentally, morally and socially better qualified to become wives and mothers than the sickly women of the rich.

From their writings it is hard for me to decide which of the many bright newspaper men in Kansas I like best. I think perhaps I would set my featherless cap for the editor of the *Atchison Globe*. He has the reputation of never going to sleep in church. Besides, he likes to work so well. He says it isn't a man's work that wears him out; it is "the ceaseless and unnecessary annoyances" that are heaped upon him by idle, impudent and impolite people. "If you aid in wearing out people unnecessarily, by your petty ways, you deserve to go to hell, where you will surely go if you don't reform." Still further, he is always talking about the women, which makes me think he is very fond of them, especially spins who let him entirely alone.

Literature is a splendid study. Nothing makes a woman more satisfied with herself than to have a fondness for the thoughts of men who are idolized by thousands of readers. Men who do not parade themselves from shore to shore and who stick to some use-

ful vocation are the winners in this life as well as in eternity. They are the ones who are contented and happy.

So you have the acquaintance of another girl whom you hope to honor with your love and affections along with your wine and tobacco. My opinion is your campaign will be a failure unless you change your habits. A man who hasn't enough regard for womanhood to leave wine and tobacco alone is not the kind of a man to make old age pleasant. Nothing is more disgusting than an old man with his mouth so full of tobacco that he can hardly talk, whose will-power and sense of decency have left him, and whose example is such as to make children and grandchildren ashamed of him—nothing, I say, is more disgusting, except it be an old woman who has become as depraved. When woman's suffrage comes it will be in order to prohibit the sale and manufacture of tobacco.

This great country should purify itself from center to shore. Kansas is the heart of the nation. We must commence being good at heart; set the surrounding States a good example.

Here in Topeka there is no way more effectual in separating yourself from your money and getting nothing in return than going to the Grand. I've attended several matinées; and to see the fine ladies with their gold opera-glasses scrutinizing each other's head dresses and wearing apparel between the acts is enough to occupy a whole chapter in describing frivolities. The stage may be a civilizer; if so, it hasn't done much yet.

Some bright writer has said, "It is better to be good than to be great." You have a chance to be good; you never can be great enough to be good until you are good enough to be great. Because it takes a wicked man to be great without being good. You are not wicked—you are just careless and indifferent.

Your friend,

LINA.

## VI.

### A RIVAL, VINA VINTAGE.

PARADISE, KANSAS, December, 1910.

*Miss Lina Gona, Topeka, Kansas:*

MY DEAR LONELY AUNT—My intense joy tonight is giving me sorrow. I never was happier, yet I am sad. This may seem incongruous to you if you have never been deeply in love. I do not know what to do. I am afraid to trust my own reason and conscience. My judgment refuses to give a decision. You know Dash Blank better than I do. Please, dear aunt, tell me all you know about him. I am afraid I am insanelly in love with him. He has been gallant and attentive to me for some time, several weeks. Once he was unduly familiar with me. We had taken a long ride in his "auto" and stopped in a secluded place near a well on one of his large farms, to get a drink of water. We had to walk quite a little distance around a steep bluff to get to the well. I asked him if any wild flowers grew in this secluded place in summer.

"None like the one I have now," he said as he placed his arm around me and kissed me.

I was so shocked, angry and insulted that I lost control of myself and commenced crying; he refused to go any farther, turned around and started back toward the auto. He asked me if he should bring me a cup of water, as he started on toward the well. I replied, "No, sir!" He was at the well a few minutes, and seemed to be fixing the windmill; anyhow, climbed the tower. He returned presently with a cup of water and said, "Here, little girl, take a cool drink of water. I did not mean to

offend you. I would not harm you for all the money there is in Kansas."

While I was drinking he took my hand in his and pressed it gently and said, "You are more to me than any young woman on earth."

I said, "How about older women?"

He looked me straight in the eye till he saw I was not going to be outdone looking, then answered, after meditating a few moments, while lighting a cigar, "They are nice, too, but I wouldn't marry one of them."

"Why?" I asked.

"Got the best reason in the world," and he smiled as serenely as the most satisfied victor in the world.

He was as good-natured, kind and sociable as could be; talked with the utmost freedom as we glided over the prairie, and he seemed to be enjoying my company more than the ride, or the cigar either, for he threw it away before it was half smoked.

We had not said anything for a few moments, when he remarked, "Conventionalism is a great barrier between me and the women, especially the young women."

I did not like to express myself, and felt confused, and he seemed to know it, and took delight in saying, "I've tested a good many kinds of vintage, and you are at the top of the list."

I was plagued, and refused to talk. This strong, handsome man has me under his magnetic power, and I am both glad and sad.

If I did not know that you and he have been intimate, I never would have told you my thoughts. I am afraid he acts with all the girls with whom he goes as he does with me. It seems if he were in earnest he would not be so jolly. To be in love with a view to marriage is so serious with me, and he regards it so lightly.

I am in no condition to write tonight, for my thoughts are all about my happy sadness.

Your loving niece,

VINA VINTAGE.

## VII.

### LESS LOVE—MORE LIGHT.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, December, 1910.

DEAR LOVESICK VINA: Your case is much the same that nearly every girl has to contend with. It is Dash's nature to act just like that, and I think he is just as much in earnest with you as he ever is with any girl. I think you had better come to Topeka during vacation, and deliberate.

There is nothing very bad about Dash, neither is there anything so very good. Great wealth has ruined more young men than ever poverty did. Dash has business capacity and he is industrious and ambitious. Really, the worst thing I know about him is being so addicted to wine and tobacco. These habits, I detest. When men are young and have pride enough to keep themselves clean, the evil effects are not so visible as when they get old and become careless. No doubt you have seen old men who were repulsive to a degree almost unbearable.

I am not so lonely as you may imagine. I like solitude better than the association of the average person. When gladness brings sadness, when pleasure brings pain, and when misery brings madness, you are in a dangerous domain. Then is when you need the philosophy of writers like Mabel Collins. She says: "We are all acquainted with that stern thing called misery, which pursues a man and strangely enough as it seems at first, pursues him with no vague or uncertain method, but with a positive and unbroken pertinacity. Its presence is not absolutely continuous, else man must cease to live, but its pertinacity is without any break. There is always the shadowy form of despair standing behind man,

ready to touch him with its terrible finger if for too long he finds himself content.

"What has given this ghastly shape the right to haunt us from the hour we are born until the hour we die? What has given it the right to stand always at our door, keeping that door ajar with its impalpable, yet plainly horrible hand, ready to enter the moment it sees fit? The greatest philosopher who ever lived succumbs before it at last, and he only is a philosopher in any sane sense who recognizes the fact that it is irresistible, and knows that that like all other men, he must suffer soon or late. It is part of the heritage of men, this pain and distress, and he who determines that nothing shall make him suffer, does but cloak himself in a profound, chilly selfishness. This cloak may protect him from pain—it will also separate him from pleasure."

You cannot enter the married state without taking the risk of much pain and suffering, no matter how good your affianced may be, and to resolve never to enter that state deprives you of some of the sweetest joys of life.

In the scattered fragments of thought given to us by the spiritual life of Mabel Collins, we learn: "If peace is to be found on earth or any joy in life, it cannot be by closing up the gates of feeling, which admit us to the loftiest and most vivid part of our existence. Sensation, as we obtain it through the physical body, affords us all that induces us to live in this shape."

The pleasant sensations caused by Dash taking your hand in his and pressing it gently while he uttered pleasant words, were divine; they are not to be ignored in making any final decision as to your course with Mr. Blank. He and Governor Stubbs have the homeliest names in Kansas, but you cannot afford to place anything against him on account of his name. Dash writes me that he has an ambition to occupy the Governor's mansion. So much of his letters to me is half-joke and whole-earnest. He could be a wonderful man if he would. He may turn out to be

like an old man who commenced his business career with a yoke of oxen, in Atchison county, Kansas, fifty years ago. He had the faculty of "making money"—as getting hold of worldly goods is expressed. He soon acquired a farm in northeastern Kansas. He denied himself the pleasures of wife and home to get another farm, then another farm, then another farm. By this time he had become abominably anxious for more farms. As age came on he became socially deformed and unattractive to young women. His conquest for farms absorbed his being. He kept on buying farms farther west, till now he owns farms through the two northern tiers of counties in Kansas, and yet he is not satisfied. Instead of marrying some good woman and rearing a family, he has spent his life laying plans to get one-third or more of all that can be produced on forty farms. He realizes that there never was a time in the history of this country when chances so completely protected by law would allow him to get an everlasting claim on the children raised on forty farms. One would think if getting farms would make him happy he ought to have contentment. I saw him not long ago, and what a dejected reality! This wizened personification of misery! But is he to blame? The laws of our country encouraged him in the direction he went.

If Dash does not get married he is apt to operate along the same line, only that he may go farther, for he has so much to start with. If he were to get married to a woman who had proper control over him—by this I mean a woman who could appeal to his spiritual nature, his conscience—a great reformation might be given him. Every man has his sympathies developed more by marriage and what follows, parentage, than anything else. Dash is naturally good, but he has grown careless because of being too much engrossed with his business, and he has become sensuous and wordly because of his independence. I am not the one who would feel like marrying him to reform him. He is honest as he sees it in everything he does. I cannot advise you, for I have

found myself incapable of always judging right in my own affairs.

No doubt he has made similar advances toward many other women, and I assure you from my own experiences he was easy to learn his distance, and I think he regards me highly as a friend.

There are so many things in the cities for single women to do to make them entirely independent from a money point of view, but she can never be independent entirely, from a social point of view, neither can he be, for nature made them for each other.

At your age, despondency is so hard to avoid, and I am willing to do all I can for you. Dash is confidential with me, and I shall not misuse either of you because of this. In his last letter he says you are more pliant than I am, more susceptible to his advances.

"She can blush and cry," is one of his assertions.

You can develop a power over him by a certain mode of action. It would be well for you to know something of the suffering of those who have made mistakes. Mabel Collins has left more consolation: "We live because it is pleasant to have the sensation of pain. It is sensation we desire, else we would with one accord try the consolation of oblivion, and the human race would become extinct. If this is the case with the physical life it is evidently the case with the emotions, the imaginations, the sensibilities, all those fine and delicate formations which, with the marvelous recording mechanism of the brain, make up the inner or subtle being; sensation is that which makes their pleasures; an infinite series of sensations is life to them. Destroy the sensation which makes them wish to persevere in the experiment of living, and there is nothing left. Therefore, the man who attempts to obliterate the sense of pain, and who proposes to maintain equal state whether he is pleased or hurt, strikes at the very root of life, and destroys the object of his own existence. And this must apply, so far as our present reasoning or intuitive powers

can show us, to every state, even that of the Oriental's longed-for Nirvana. This condition can only be one more subtle and more exquisite in sensation if it is a state at all, and not annihilation, and according to the experience of life from which we are at present able to judge, increased subtlety of sensation means increased vividness—as for instance, a man of sensibility and imagination feels more in consequence of the unfaithfulness or faithfulness of a friend, than can a man of even the grossest physical nature feel through the medium of the senses. Thus, it is clear that the philosopher who refuses to feel, leaves himself no place to retreat to, not even the distant and unattainable Nirvanic goal. He can only deny himself his heritage of life, which is in other words the right of sensation. If he chooses to sacrifice that which makes him man, he must be content with mere idleness of consciousness, a condition compared to which the oyster's is a life of excitement.

“But no man is able to accomplish such a feat. The fact of his continued existence proves plainly that he still desires sensation, and desires it in such a positive and active form that the desire must be gratified in physical life. It would seem more practical not to deceive one's self by the sham of stoicism, not to attempt renunciation of that with which nothing would induce to part. Would it not be a bolder policy, a more promising mode of solving the great enigma of existence, to grasp it, to take hold firmly and to demand of it the mystery of life? If men will but pause to consider what lessons they have learned from pleasure and pain, much might be guessed of that strange thing which causes these effects. But men are prone to turn away hastily from self-study, or from any close analysis of human nature. Yet there must be a science of human life as intelligible as any of the methods of schools. The science is unknown,<sup>6</sup> it is true, and its existence is merely guessed, merely hinted at,<sup>7</sup> by one or two of our most advanced thinkers. The development of a

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science is only the discovery of what is already in existence, and chemistry is as magical and incredible now to the plowman as the science of life is to the man of ordinary perceptions. Yet there may be and there must be a seer who perceives the growth of the new knowledge as the eager dabblers in the experiments of the laboratory saw the system of knowledge now attained evolving itself out of nature for man's use and benefit."

L. G.

## VII.

### LOOKING AT THE HIGHER LIFE.

November 21, 1910.

*Miss Lina Gona, Topeka, Kansas:*

DEAREST FRIEND: I want to be perfectly frank with you, and in being so it is going to be exceedingly hard to keep your friendship. The delicacy and fineness of your nature and the subtlety of your conclusions are doubly hard for me to deal with, because I act altogether from a practical or worldly point of view, while you act and deduct from an ideal point of view. I think you are largely imaginary—spiritual you would probably call it.

I shall not attempt to compliment your beauty any more. I shall leave the ineffable to those spiritually inclined. It is in keeping with my fancy to believe you to be honest in your pet reformations. But the successful men of this age will list you with Tolstoi, who I noticed by yesterday's *Daily Capital* has passed into eternity. For many years he bordered on insanity, and if his plans had not been modified by his family's interference he would have left his children in poverty. He may have enjoyed the kind of life he lived, but I think Mr. Roosevelt excelled him two to one in the enjoyment of life, up to date. Maybe Roosevelt will not die as peacefully and calmly as did Tolstoi, for he is acknowledged to be the most worldly man of this age, and I endorse his career. He believes in living according to Roosevelt and does not run after any fads and new-fangled theories. "Every dog has his day, but the nights belong to the cats." Now do not take this as an insinuation toward anything you may hold to in your ideas of reformation.

I read the *Weekly Globe* because it is such a critic, but the effort it makes to twit Stubbs on his election majority shows how trivial the comments of able men often are. Stubbs is a statesman; of course Howe is too old-fashioned to see it.

There is much of the regulation business as applied to State laws, which is a nuisance. Take, for instance, the Inheritance Tax law: it has stirred up a lot of strife and animosity. If the State has to have more funds why can it not levy on something besides what is left to the widows and orphans by fathers who have spent their lives trying to provide for their posterity? Yesterday's *Daily Capital* contained information from the State Treasurer showing that the State did not need the funds coming from this source.

I am not going to say anything against regulating freight rates, for the railroads have become more powerful than the courts. Regulating interest rates does not amount to anything, especially on large loans.

When we loan money out here to farmers we charge 6 per cent. per annum. Then we reserve 2 per cent. out of the amount applied for as commission for making the loan. To illustrate: A farmer applies for \$1,000, and gives his note for \$1,000 and annual interest notes \$60 each, for five years, amounting to \$300. Then we take 2 per cent. per annum for five years, amounting to \$100, from the \$1,000, and give him \$900. You see we get commission on our own money. There is no law regulating commissions.

As a general thing women know so little about finance, I thought I would make this plain. I do not know if Mr. Stubbs makes use of this commission dodge at his bank; anyhow I haven't noticed any proposed legislation to regulate commissions.

There are those like yourself who would not want the State to stop at regulating farm rents, but would want to regulate all kinds of wages, regulate what we drink, regulate what we chew and don't swallow, regulate what we smoke, regulate the time to

retire at night, regulate the time to get up in the morning, regulate the time to go to church, and finally regulate the time to die.

Of course I know some of the things are already regulated by custom, but there are cranks who would like to see it all done by law. Then there are politicians who get so patriotic they would like to see it all done so there would be more commissions of various kinds, and a lot more inspectors to munch at the public pie-counter.

I have not said just exactly what I wanted to say, nor have I used as nice language as I would like to have done. If I could only write like old Ed Howe, I'd be the happiest man on earth; provided, however, in the meantime, if I were not regulated too much.

My dear good friend, I'm afraid you'll be reading between the lines again; so I may as well tell you I took a drink of wine and a good cigar before I could get my muse to work at all. The cigar has gone out; so I'll take a chew to regulate my muse some more.

Now we will look at that farm rent business some. Just think of the nice old people in Topeka and all the other cities, grandfathers and grandmothers who are peacefully and happily enjoying their old age by living off the rent from farms they own, farms which they worked so hard in prime of life while rearing their families;—no one but the thoughtless and heartless would think of disturbing this old-age serenity. It seems to me you are studying mischief more than you are literature. You'll never make a Mary Ellen. You are more apt to make a Helen Willmans, judging from the finishing touch you gave to the letter you wrote to Vina last week. She lost it on the road to school and there was no envelope with it and the first part was missing. I persuaded myself—which wasn't hard to do—that she lost it on purpose for me to find. If you are not wholly a woman, you are partly a freak. I suppose that was something very nice, very exalted, you got through the mystic zeal of Mabel Collins; it must have been some-

thing very elevating, but I must admit I am too stupid to comprehend it. Herbert N. Casson wrote a little book entitled "The Crime of Credulity." You ought to get it and read it carefully. He said in substance: Those who claimed to be empowered by getting in touch with the mystic Higher Life, with a creed where absolute purity, justice and truth prevail,—they will in a few years fall short of common everyday decency. They attempt what is impossible, and the reaction brings them below mediocrity; and they always terminate in some kind of a disgraceful business enterprise. Every divine philosophy, every coöperative commonwealth, has ended in a lawsuit, or a disgraceful squabble over property.

Theosophy, spiritualism, æsthetic cults, or whatever name you may apply to mysticism, never has and never will terminate in a Universal Brotherhood. Some of these mild forms of social and spiritual insanity have had to be governed by common or constitutional law, or many followers of such would go entirely crazy. A large class of idle women kept like dolls contribute to these crazes. There was Helen Blavatsky, who claimed to be "a messenger of the adepts" thirty-five years ago, attracted Annie Besant, Olcott and others, to promote the study and explain the psychical phenomena. They were going to establish Universal Brotherhood, making no distinctions. This all ended in a squabble similar to the Booth, the Dewey, and the Eddy disgraces. The courts of the constitutional law had to settle all these "divine inceptions."

You had better let the cults and the isms alone; pay more attention to prohibition, woman suffrage, or matrimony.

Something tangible suits me a good deal better than the high-souled abstractions, but, worldly though I am, I'm not altogether satisfied with myself, lately. I find wine and tobacco have almost got to be a necessity with me, and I have concluded to quit them both for one month and study the effects. Vina asked me to

do it just as an experiment. I want to marry a good woman, and I do not believe the best type of woman is going to have me unless I do this, and I am almost convinced that these habits are injurious. Everybody seems to want to have some kind of a creed, religion or ism to live by, and I got interested a while ago in what the writer calls Intellectualism. I think I am going to like this; so I'll have to "crawfish" a little, as we boys at school used to call it, when we found we had said something we could not consistently defend.

There is something in mental enjoyment, for I am getting more and more interested in this correspondence. I was reared in the Christian Church, as you know, and never gave religion much thought, but this man Casson in his book, "Crime of Credulity," has made me an agnostic, or he rather convinced me that I was already one and did not know it. I have heard preachers say an agnostic is a great burden on society. I'm going to get books and study some on this subject and see wherein the burden lies. Every man ought to do something in the world of thought. Casson says: "The greater the division of labor, the less brains the individual worker requires to earn a living. It is possible for us to have cities and factories that will be the wonder of the world, and yet have sixty per cent of our citizens as superstitious as Malays." He seems to think there is no system of government within the knowledge of man that will remain permanent while superstition is prevalent, and insists on every thoughtful man leaving a record of his individuality in book form, if possible. This is a wonderful conclusion, in which he thinks science is going to be the server of a man's morals instead of religion. Science is to explain everything known to morality in regulation style, so that the whole human family will, step by step, solve everything into a harmonious civil government. All I ever said to you about Telepathy was purely speculative; if there is anything in it I don't know it. I do not make any pre-

tense of a perfectly accurate knowledge on anything except the fundamental rules of arithmetic and the knowledge that I am Dash Blank, one of the dogs who is having his day. To me women are most mysterious in their tenacity in holding on to the churches and orthodox religion.

Mr. Casson says, on page 78: "Today all who have studied the history of human opinions have no faith in conclusions that are based upon intuitions. Consciousness is like the dictionary,—it gives you whatever you search for. Philosophies and religion based on intuition have existed in the most barbarous times, without being felt as a progressive or a refining influence. There is now little or no doubt that intuitions are simply inherited or acquired mental tendencies. A man may have an intuition that makes him murder or steal."

Many things I have said to you were "half-joke and whole-earnest," but the older I get the more serious I am; and I now know there are men who have good character and high aims who are amply paid for their goodness in the happiness they enjoy.

Men of all ages have doubted their conclusions when based entirely on their reason; then is when they give up reason and resort to intuition and prayer; and some of the worst crimes of every age were excused by those who committed them. The murderers of our martyred Presidents are cases in proof.

Again, some writers are not sure of their reason and adopt fictitious names to argue the questions in doubt; or else they do it to avoid publicity. From this has sprung many of the meritorious books of fiction. The strongest minds if allowed to dwell too long on complicated questions will become unreliable.

I am determined to get married, and if I can't marry the girl I want I am going to marry some one of the many who want me. I am in no way mixed up with that belief which holds that marriages are arranged by a Higher Life; if I were I might have had several divine-affinity experiences.

I have destroyed that letter written by the dear little girl who would have been my wife if she had lived. I want a home with the domestic influences which will give me contentment. I do not know what the lowest degradation of society is like. If it is anything like what Roosevelt describes in Civic Helpfulness, I never want to see it. He says: "The young enthusiast, who for the first time brought into contact with the terrible suffering and stunting degradation which are so evident in many parts of our great cities, is apt to become so appalled as to lose his head. If there is a twist in his mental or moral make-up, he will never regain his poise; but if he is sound and healthy he will soon realize that things being bad affords no justification for making them worse, and that the only safe rule is for each man to strive to do his duty in a spirit of sanity and wholesome common-sense. No one of us can make the world move on very far, but it moves only when each one of a very large number does his duty."

Having no religious creed to guide me, I've concluded I ought to search my reason for a daily guide in doing good, because it will be easier to live by a lenient rule founded on my own judgment than to try to follow the precept of the Bible. So here is my guide to good citizenship and a happy old age: Health is first; business, second; society, third; and pleasure all the time.

To do only those things which are healthful will be a very easy matter while I am in the prime of life, but as I grow old there will have to be a good many alterations in my daily conduct. These alterations will be based on the experience I get as I advance in years. My judgment based on my reason and experience will preclude all medicine advertisements and all complicated advice given by doctors and health officers, provided I am not overcome by some accident, in which case, I shall turn myself over to a practitioner.

In matters of business I'll be guided by my legal rights as I understand them and shall not consult any lawyer unless my ignorance leads me into trouble;—I'm not intoxicated. I've just got my muse in motion for the especial benefit of one who is going to learn so much by thought taken from the written or printed page.

Next is society. A matured man, without a wife, is an anomaly; so is a matured woman without a husband. Society rules, based so largely on custom taken from tradition and religion, are the direct cause of most old bachelors and most old maids; and a man's reason, experience and judgment are a good deal harder to apply on these rules and customs than they are on health and business topics. When a man is satisfied that a woman is well qualified from a physical point of view to be his wife, the question of her religious qualifications comes in the way and makes such a barrier that he gets, or rather she gets discouraged, because he cannot indorse what preachers and priests call divine marriages based on a foolish ceremony; so I have concluded that the woman who marries me will go with me to the Probate Judge and get married according to sensible civil law. Vina has promised to marry me provided we can make it sacred by a minister's ceremony.

Now about pleasure; I am going to get it wherever and whenever I can, being careful not to injure others in any way in pursuing it, always trying to produce as much pleasure for others as I get myself. Also, I intend to take pleasure in relieving others from their pain and sorrow.

In answering this you will as usual read a great deal between the lines by giving intuitions a chance to help you.

DASH BLANK.

## VIII.

### CONFLICTING OPINIONS OVER LAWS.

. TOPEKA, KANSAS, Nov. 24, 1910.

MR. BLANK: Some antiquated philosopher said, "No man can help being what he is," and a man who operates against the rules and customs of society and has no conscientious scruples to check him may be excusable before God. However, society cannot afford to let him have full sway and the rights and opinions of all honest people must have protection by law. There was evidence in your letter that there is a divine spark in your mind closely related to your reason. It is worth my while to light this transient spark into a glow of the Higher Life. In doing this I shall have to excuse your uncouth manners. Why do you write it "Old Ed Howe"? There is always a delightful sensation both to the receiver and giver of good manners.

I hope you are a "diamond in the rough," and will have become polished before you get into the Governor's Mansion. Quite as much appeared to me "between the lines" as was contained in them. In your looking at the Higher Life, you do not seem to have seen much of it. Surely you must have quit looking at it before you aroused your "muse." When a man has to resort to drugs or wine to start circulation of thought, he has been abusing himself. Mr. Roosevelt does not always conduct himself according to his highest aims. That rough expression you quoted was very unbecoming. He knew men generally appreciated that kind of hilarity.

I agree with you in this, that Mr. Howe is the ablest critic, as well as the best paragrapher in Kansas, and Dodd Gaston is the most sarcastic one.

Your comments on the Inheritance Tax Law show very plainly that you know but very little about it. It taxes nothing under \$5000, and \$5000 used with economy is enough to put a family in possession of all the comforts of life. Three-fourths of the inheritances of Kansas are not touched at all by its assessments. Whatever inefficiency there is about it can be very easily redressed. It is just as good a law as the Prohibition law, and a good deal more easily enforced. The State Treasurer never said the State did not need the funds accruing from this law; he merely intimated that we could get along without them. Widows and helpless orphans will seldom come under the Inheritance Tax Laws; it is more often rich widows and grown children, well-to-do, who have to bear these assessments.

The reason you have nothing to say against State regulation of freight and passenger rates is because you would be a beneficiary, whereas in the State regulation of land rents you would have to let loose of wealth which you got unfairly. Nowhere else in your letter did there appear such glaring selfishness as in this regulation argument; and the illustration you gave in regard to interest, so that *we women* could understand, was another selfish, egotistical act. Why did you not refer to Mrs. Lease with due respect? Such references are a reflection on your youthful training as well as matured impoliteness.

The commission you take when you loan money is nothing more nor less than a burdensome, dishonest graft imposed on the borrower. And there ought to be a law to put every man who gets \$100 in any such way, in the penitentiary. To think you would be so thoughtless, or drunk—its hard to tell which—as to brag about it, is enough to make one discouraged. The redeeming part about you is that you seem to be honest. You scarcely could have said anything more trivial than your self-made rules for which you were going to displace the Decalogue. I could easily infer this displacement between the lines. I never ex-

pected you to say anything quite so insignificant, and I can account for it in no other way than you were imbibing too freely. It was unworthy of you. You are going to be one of the most miserable of men before many years if you do not quit your vicious habits.

I would rather see Vina Vintage in her grave than see her married to you with your present disregard for those ennobling influences which you are seemingly going to denounce.

Those who have been brought up under the influences of the churches, many of whom seldom reason for themselves about morals, and who truly believe in the moral guidance of the churches,—these would be a sad menace to society indeed if they should deny the teachings of the Bible, and adopt your little, insignificant, quadruple rule of three to guide them to happiness and usefulness on this earth, to say nothing of the Higher Life happiness which is to be enjoyed here.

If you were not intoxicated, you must have been inebriated, or else your sanity is in danger.

Because you own land mortgages and bank stock, does not make you one particle better than the farm hand who wears overalls and works at hard labor ten hours per day. It is evident from the way you write that you would not raise your hand or voice against that 2 per cent commission outrage practiced by the money-loaners all over the State. You have not shaken my convictions in the least; and I still maintain that if railroads are to be confined to a 6 per cent profit on their actual or physical wealth, farmers, bankers, merchants and all other industries should get the same treatment.

You speak deprecatingly about inspectors "munching at the pie-counters," not realizing that discounting 2 per cent commission from the face of a loan and charging exorbitant rent on land are much more dishonest and unjust ways of getting money.

No wonder you felt just like you had not said just what you wanted to say.

That heart-rending sadness you have for the retired farmers, grandfathers and grandmothers, who would have the tranquillity of old age disturbed by a law to regulate land rents, is certainly the limit of worldly grief, for these same retired farmers already have bank accounts under the protection of a guarantee-deposit law; and this very day this law was enforced at Abilene and the depositors were paid in full with certificates good anywhere in the State. This Guarantee-Deposit law together with the U. S. Postal Banking Law, is all that is needed for old age tranquillity. These retired farmers whose old age so grieved your tender emotions are living in modern homes of their own, and glide through these well-kept avenues in their fine automobiles more independent than the landlords of the medieval ages, and if you had even good horse sense you would sell part of your land, and buy one of these modern homes and make something out of yourself. You might get into intellectual work like Mr. Howe, whom you desire to be like. In this ambition you are all right, and I would like to see you pursue it. Get out of that disgraceful land-monopolizing, money-making rut and do something useful, something morally elevating.

You made a very strong quotation from Mr. Casson's work, but all churches and all creeds have the same privileges in this country, and it is no business of yours, mine, or Mr. Casson's, what they teach so long as the members and followers are good citizens.

Something much more important, something that has a bearing on the welfare of the rising generation, occurred yesterday here in Topeka: A ranch containing six sections of land in Wabaunsee county was sold for \$150,000. The man who sold this land bought it for from two to ten dollars per acre, and sold it for \$23 per acre, making \$100,000, for which he gave society nothing.

The land laid idle or was leased out to cattle-men while the owner lived here in Topeka and population moved west. No effort on the part of the owner made the land worth any more today than it was worth twenty years ago. But increase of population and the improvement of the country in general around this land made this increase of \$100,000; but the idler here in Topeka gets the \$100,000, and the rising generation must indirectly pay it, even though the new owners make settlement in full, for the increase in price of products on this land is the factor which ultimately pays this \$100,000 monopoly.

Now then, our conscientious governor, Mr. Stubbs, is just home from San Antonio, Texas, where he has been in attendance at the Trans-Mississippi Congress, in which there were resolutions passed with a view to preventing railroads from unduly drawing on the means of the people in freight charges; all this, mind you, is being done while an idle citizen in his own town completes a \$100,000 land monopoly deal. If it is proper for a State to legislate against a railroad taking advantage of the people, why is it not the right thing to do to legislate against these \$100,000 land-monopoly deals?

So you are going to get married, and if you cannot get the girl you want, you are going to take one of the "many" who want you. Here is more egotism. Here is one ism, Dash, that is going to do you more harm than all the other isms can do you good, I am afraid. Yo seem to be so wrapped up in your worldly self that you hinder self-improvement. You have fine ability, but many a bright young fellow has let the ego take such a firm hold on him that he could not advance; then he becomes the object of the severest ridicule of his acquaintances. The most potent forces are hidden forces which are in constant operation throughout the universe; and man can only connect himself with these forces by thought; so think more and talk and write less; then you may gain some from the hidden forces. I also

doubt the efficiency of prayer in its literal sense as is exemplified by preachers and others by word of mouth, but to exercise your brain in deep earnest consideration makes you capable and powerful in influencing others. The pagans talked to trees, rocks, and wooden gods, and found they became apt in the expression of their thoughts; they believed they got this loquacity from their wooden gods.

Those who pray for power and strength of mind get their prayers answered in the same way. You can never win the girl you want by writing or talking to me about her. The thing for you to do in this matrimonial campaign is to take yourself into consideration with your mental and moral powers, analyze your weaknesses and bad habits, get in touch with the higher life, for a higher civilization is now calling for a new adjustment and management of all our industries. Those benevolently inclined are determined that every honest worker can, must and shall be provided with a new social system under which he will furnish his family with all the comforts of life without having to work so many hours per day as he now does. To do this, these \$100,000 land-grafters must reimburse society by a graduated system of taxation which will compel these grafters to return a part of their ill-gotten gains to the State.

In *Social Evolution*, by Benjamin Kidd, page 14: "We are beginning to hear from many quarters that the social question is at the bottom a religious question, and that to its solution it behooves the churches in the interest of society to address themselves." Creeds which stand in the way of a better social system will go out of existence because of non-support. The higher life can be attained only when the physical condition of mankind is kept at a high moral standard.

There is evidence coming now from the writers in every civilized country, showing that State control of all industries is going to be extended until speculators in land will have to confine them-

selves to very small areas. This can be done through graduated tax laws so efficiently that men will not buy land to hold out of use; so efficiently that men will buy it only to make it produce to its fullest capacity; so efficiently that it will come down in price to its first cost or physical valuation; and so efficiently that prices of farm products will be cheapened so that laborers in all the industries will not have to use so much of their earnings to buy good food supplies.

The owners of large tracts of land are plundering the people more than the railroads are, or ever did. If a farmer is allowed to increase his rent, why not increase freight rates?

To meet the Governor on the street and shake his hand is to be convinced of his integrity. A close observer can tell a good man from a bad one by his address and walk. There is a firmness in his speech and bearing that leads one to believe him to be the coming man of Kansas in national affairs. You will say this is only the opinion of a love-sick old maid, and that the Governor is only an ordinary able man, and that it is only safe to pass such high opinions on dead men whose weaknesses have passed forever.

LINA GONA.

## IX.

### MAKING AMENDS AND RESOLUTIONS.

#### Finding New Convictions.

BLANCO, KANSAS, Nov. 30, 1910.

MISS GONA: That "antiquated philosopher" who said no man can help being what he is, would have been more generous and nearer right if he had said, "No man can help being what he is not." It is a very easy matter for any man to be what he is, but when he undertakes to be what a moralist calls a good citizen, is when he finds his efforts are ineffectual.

There is such a general lack of lucidity in what I started to say, that you may think I am "inebriating" again. I can assure you I am not under the influence of wine and tobacco. I have quit them both, maybe not for all time, but I am going to note very carefully the effect on my optimistic conduct. If I become a pessimist on account of disconnecting myself with these evils, I may go back to their consoling influences again. I have commenced what I hope will terminate in a successful courtship. Vina has promised to be my bride on much the same conditions that you hinted would qualify me for your consideration some time ago.

I think I shall be successful with Vina, for she is so much younger than you, not so much set in her ways, and has a greater yearning for masculine companionship than you ever had; besides, I am going to try harder to make myself what I ought to be to win her.

You have come into my life as a confidant whose lasting friendship I cherish as much as I cherish Vina's love. Being in love with

Vina as I am, it is very hard for me to discuss those questions which seemed so interesting to you in your last letter, simply because I cannot get my mind away from her dear face and form long enough to concentrate my thoughts elsewhere. If I had taken a glass of wine and a cigar when I sat down to answer your letter my mind would have operated at once on those questions, political and social, without bobbing around as it is now doing. To be in love is to be, in a degree, crazy. If this crazy feeling can be mastered, a calm rationality may take its place. However, I am fully determined I am not going to resort to wine or tobacco in order to answer your letter.

You spoke about my violating the rules and customs of society in the estimate I made about religious and social rules, then you immediately attack the business and political rules. Now the thought occurs to me that the business rules or land laws of the country are about as important to the people as those customs which I dislike; and it seems the welfare of property-owners is at stake and that the people in general cannot afford to let your theories have full sway; so I'll proceed to tell you you had better keep them locked up in your desk.

That "divine spark" you noticed was probably caused by the wine or tobacco, and I opine that you will not notice any afflatus of divinity in this.

If you should get those "transient sparks" to glowing too freely I might get such a following that I could start a new religion and I think I'd call it Blankism. I wish I could be as serious, refined and mannerly as you are in your correspondence; but that is out of the question. I can't do it; besides, Old Ed Howe and Mary Ellen will never know it. I got in the habit from reading the cursed, ill-mannered newspapers, and the *Atchison Globe* was one of 'em. You needn't joke me so much about getting into the Governor's Mansion. There have been bigger fools than I who got into high places. My muse is beginning to wobble about some,

but I've chewed off about half of the pencil before I got it, or her, I should say, started. Do you think all muses belong to the Higher Life?

Yes, I think the Prohibition Law and the Inheritance Tax Law are about alike; each is as good as the other if not a little better.

Since I've thought the matter over thoroughly, I've concluded it is all wrong for the State to try to manage freight rates. I'm "agin" it now. Stubbs is off his job.

Of course I can see now, since it is too late, that I made a "bad break" in saying what I did about the comprehension of women. I ask forgiveness. Likely I was "imbibing" too freely when I wrote so "trivial," and I thank you for letting me down so easily,— "imbibing" was such a fine word. I plead guilty.

I do not consider myself any better than a *good* farm hand; and I think you were a little bit too severe in what you said about land and mortgages, deeds and bank stock. I do not consider that 2% commission, which bankers exact for making big loans, an outrage. It takes money to run risks and operate a bank, look up abstracts and maybe see the land upon which money is loaned, depreciate in value by panics or fool socialistic and populist laws.

All I said about inspectors I still defend. It is the case in the enforcement of every new law; it takes a lot of inspectors and a lot more appointees and sub-clerks.

That *guarantee-deposit law* will be the cause of hard times some day, that, together with interest, rent, railroad rate laws. Many of the capable men will quit business, put everything into money, bank it, and join the automobile brigandage. Whenever laws hinder men from exercising their business capacities to their fullest extent, then the whole people is sure to suffer the loss of this much energy.

I'm even "going back" on the proposed legislation of regulating freight rates.

Emerson said, "Be yourself every day, no difference if what you

say today is contradictory to what you said yesterday." It is very convenient to have some good authority to take care of one's inconsistencies. Excepting the Bible, Emerson is the best authority. Dodd Gaston comes as near being a ton of gas, according to newspaper parlance, as anything I can imagine. I've been told he always sticks his tongue out when he tries to write. He and Drake Watson ought to have gimlet-holes drilled in their craniums to relieve the pressure; or else get a poetic escape attached like Uncle Walt Mason has, "When Christmas comes," said a Kansas man.

You do not know the meaning of some of the wonderful complex words you use—"Horse Sense." Eh? That is just what I have got. There is not a horse in the State but what would get out of Topeka or any other city if he could. I don't claim to know very much, but what I do know I know with a vengeance.

I don't want any intellectual work. Intellectuality is an awful contagion. I wouldn't stay around those big libraries and be exposed like you are for the best modern home in Topeka. Reading the newspapers and magazines gives me all the gas-pressure I need. Since we have rural mail and telephones I fail to see where city people have any advantage of us. We have tragedies and comedies enough fully described every day in the dailies without any of the soulful "make-ups" that pose in the cities. If I remember right, according to some of your writings you are not so very much attached to such entertainment.

I did not have any reference to you when I said, "one of the many who want me." If God-l-mighty made me indiscreet by giving me poor judgment in matter of things to say when I am trying to be my best, that's his fault, not mine.

You talk about potent forces being hidden forces, and that the only way to get connection is by Higher Life. You can't connect yourself with any kind of force only by thought, except you get struck by lightning, run down by an automobile, or something

along that line; so it seems you get a little bit platitudinous in your search for divine light to guide me in what I say. We are not so very far apart on the power of prayer in its religious sense. In case of an emergency I think either of us would not neglect to keep our "powder dry."

I'm almightily attached to you in a "spiritual way"—you would call it. Maybe after all those spiritual marriages the Mormons used to indulge in were along the line of development into the Higher Life.

This Higher Life Cult, being something superior to good-every-day common-sense, is altogether a fad, and has no more force as a moral guide than good sound judgment. It is a remnant of a mystic age, and belongs to Asceticism.

Judging from the number of preachers who "go wrong"—the accounts of which we find in all the news publications—there is no better guide to rectitude in the Christian religion than we have in common everyday ethics, which the moral medical professions refer to as a proper guide to good citizenship.

I do not see how I am to talk and write less if I keep in touch with your mode of action along these lines, and I wouldn't give you up for anything except it be Miss Vintage; and I know I can never win her only by keeping in harmony with you, for she thinks you are the quintessence of perfect womanhood.

Our moral and physical natures are not separable; one cannot suffer without the other becoming tainted. If we have a thorough knowledge of our physical being it is an easy matter to see the moral plane and know its limits.

The medical profession, from the knowledge it has of the human body, is much better qualified to give moral guidance than the theologians. If ten of the best doctors in this country, free from church taint and dogmatism of every kind, would get together and do their best, they could form a better code of morals than the Decalogue, and civilization would be safer and advance

to a higher point of perfection than could be attained if all the theologians—preachers, priests, bishops, pontiffs all types whatsoever of moralists, *so called*—would get together and do their best on a code for the same purpose. The doctors, the physicians, the surgeons are scientists, and know where the restraints to our sensuous natures should be applied. They know the limit to which sensuous enjoyments can be safely gratified, beyond which pain, vexation and misery follow. Materialistic monism on a scientific basis, universally taught and practiced, would benefit the morals of this civilization in fifty years more than all the churches, priests and preachers have benefitted it in the last 1000 years.

Universal education and political freedom, coming as they are, hand in hand, are the love-lights of emblazoned hopes toward which a patient people is looking with confidence.

In contemplating an existence without a body, an agnostic seems more honest than a dogmatist; this holds good, too, in thinking a higher life is in some mysterious way connected with our physical being.

An incredulous notion leads me to believe that a graduated land-tax law would be an absurdity. I would like to see you outline it and suggest how it should be applied; then point out how it would benefit the State.

I guess it is like the socialism which is becoming so prevalent—looks well as a theory, but no safe way of applying it.

Is life everlasting? To the extent that matter is everlasting, though life may have innumerable forms.

The individual forms all pass out of consciousness. Force, energy, spirit, soul, or whatever other abstractions that may be thought of, all are but agencies or properties either passing through or belonging to matter. The power to think is purely a property of matter.

In the economy of nature, the object of human life is perpetuation, happiness, and contentment; and when lived to its

fullest, richest and best extreme, a calm and peaceful willingness to cease in favor of other forms.

Eternal peace awaits all forms of life; and this prating about heaven "on high" is the merest kind of foolishness.

The natural laws which govern life, health and happiness do not conflict, and when they are learned and obeyed no religion can equal them in "making life worth its living."

Truth is bound to be triumphant in this. Science sails ahead of all religions, and the way they twist and squirm and overhaul their doctrines to sail in the same course without doing damage to their creeds, would be pitiful if it were not so amusing.

DASH BLANK.

## X.

### RELIGION, PROHIBITION AND WOMAN SUFFRAGE VS. MONISM.

TOPEKA, KANSAS, Dec. 5, 1910.

MR. BLANK: You certainly do manifest a very unsteady condition of thought in most of your letter. There is a general lack of dignity in most things you say which leads me to believe you would not worry much if I should have nothing more to do with you. However, for the sake of hopes which I fondly entertain, I shall continue the friendship. The reason your "efforts are ineffectual," you do not understand how to apply zeal; you are too much inclined to make fun out of what ought to be sacred. You can be lucid when you try, but you seem to enjoy letting your conclusions go against religion. The most redeeming feature I see about you now is that you are going to quit those bad habits, consequently I look for a wonderful change in you before long.

You are hoping for a successful courtship; many a successful courtship is the beginning of a very unsuccessful marriage; and if you should change your mind on matters of domestic and marital importance and lightly shift the change onto Emerson or some other authority, what a lot of disappointment and unhappiness might follow! Some men, and women too, do not consider marriage from a sacred point of view, but act upon the "crazy" impulse of the moment. You committed yourself in the assertion that you were, in a degree, "crazy."

See how easy it is to go wrong when you are too emotional. Perhaps the warmth and fervency you are having with the divine passion aroused by Vina's youth and beauty will subside before another year rolls around. Then what? Like most other men,

you will see some other young, accomplished woman who, unintentionally, will make you "in a degree, crazy." I must admit I have suffered considerable disappointment, yes, and have even shed tears—though shedding tears seems to be a part of a woman's life, and really gives her some relief—because I permit myself to love you "in a degree." How handy!

Now, Dash, I am going to speak as plainly to you as I can; my own experience, as well as the wide observation I have taken from other women, will bear me out in what I have to say. You are not the man to make Vina happy. Your life, in marriage, would not blend with hers; you are too old and unyielding. There would be inharmony from the very first. She is deeply religious. She has been reared on religion and poverty in a barren country, away from the evils of city society, and is as pure in her maidenhood as a woman can be. She believes in a heaven, she believes in Sunday Schools, and is devoted to all her church rules; and the Decalogue is a good deal more to her than your agnostic views are to you. She believes that intelligence is the work of the brain, and that love and religion are the works of the heart. She classes morality with the mind, and love and religion with the spirit, belonging to the Higher Life. She believes you must love your neighbor as you do yourself. If you should swear before her as you once good-naturedly did before me, she would be shocked—disgusted with you to a point of dismissal.

I am glad to know that I remain a trusted confidant; I did hope to be more; but could easily see how perfectly natural it would be for you to become attached to Vina in blooming youth and beauty, in preference to me. It is true that she is more easily impressed now, but to say that she has more desire for "masculine attention" than I ever did, is putting it too strong. Had you come into my society when I was Vina's age, I know I should have been at your mercy. Twelve years of experience and observation have made me able to see the married state as it really is. Many

marriages are not a failure, but too many are ; so consider, Dash, what the marriage may be in point of success, and not the courtship. I am not in a position to give Vina advice in this ; advice from me would be more apt to be misconstrued—she knowing that I have entertained you in an intimate friendship—than from any other source.

I hope you can appreciate the precarious situation I am in, and not misconstrue anything either.

Philosophy is a feeble weapon with which to combat passion. Passion is often blind to every form of reason ; this is a religious sentiment. Lina has been taught that the promptings of the heart are the spirit of God.

You have said so much in burlesque on sacred topics that I am inclined to let you alone so far as making any reply at present is concerned. You will likely meet an experience before long, which will be more convincing than any argument ; so I shall deliberate some on that Graduated Tax theory. I do not claim to be qualified to do the subject justice, for the theory is not mine ; but I have noticed all new theories have to contend with ridicule.

An assessment on about \$5000 might be termed the first or primary assessment on land owned by any one person, and we will suppose that this assessment will be about \$100 per year. Now, whatever land any one person owns over and above the value of \$5000 should be assessed 100 per cent more up to \$10,000, making the second grade amount to \$200 for the second-grade holding ; so that a man would have to pay \$300 taxes on a \$10,000 property and only \$100 on a \$5000. On all properties over \$10,000 valuation, make a still higher grade of assessment, so high that men would not invest in land for speculation. This would increase the tax funds of the State immensely, and would have a tendency to increase the farming population. But in connection with this proposed Graduated Tax Law it would be necessary to enact a rent law prohibiting the owner of a \$10,000 farm from

charging more than \$600—or this equivalent in grain or stock—yearly rent. If this were not done, the owners of large tracts of land would charge the renter enough to defeat the increased assessment and make the renter pay it. This proposed legislation is on the same basis that we are demanding of the railroads when we claim they should only charge enough to realize 6 per cent. on their physical valuation.

The tax funds of the State would be greatly augmented by a Graduated Tax Law, and the State could commence "conservation" by putting in fills across the draws on all section lines holding the rainfall to prevent floods, and the same work would advance the Good-Roads Proposition, giving at the same time more employment; so that every citizen would be benefitted.

The *Mail and Breeze* will probably outline a very thorough plan for a Graduated Tax Law before long; this paper has made mention of such a law many times.

You seem to have had several flights in the latter part of your communication, and to belittle religion is a fair sample of your fairness. Now, because some preachers have "gone wrong" is nothing in particular to the discredit of the Christian Religion. Men in all the vocations go wrong. If you should commit some serious crime, the evil of it should not be charged to the business which you operate in or had operated in prior to the committal.

Your denunciation of the Higher Life, in which so many find enjoyment, is nothing against the "fad" as a theory. Every advancement that has ever been made in the history of society was preceded by a theory, and when any man sets his judgment up against established views on religious questions, using such sweeping assertions as you do, he runs the risk of making himself ridiculous. If you cannot see any good in such cults, it degrades you in the estimation of a great many nice people who do believe in them as being sound doctrines. You surely cannot claim there is harm or evil attached to the support of a cult like the Higher

Life. Those who believe in the Higher Life do not believe in the degrading doctrine of Eternal Punishment, which, to a refined, sensitive nature, is one of the most horrible things imaginable to be imposed for a disbelief or lack of faith.

In this recent cult, the Higher Life, the beatitude of the old-time Religion is being preserved and the horrible place of fire is disclaimed.

The modern Christian is nothing like the one who used to burn witches; he tries to get in the front rank of every movement that is good, gracious and gentle. As a citizen he is quiet, unobtrusive, and free from bad habits. He sees the betterment of our civilization in the Prohibition movement, and I believe he would be the first one to help in prohibiting the manufacture and sale of tobacco.

Some of the best people I know are Christians, and are very devotional. They have very learned writers, one of whom is Hugh Black, who claims that a man may be moral in self-culture and in all his relations to his fellow-men and yet lack the most important essential of being good from the fact that his feelings from the heart have not led him into the highest exaltation of the emotional life of his being, which worship, faith and love of God give him. There is something so beatifying in this claim that one likes to believe it and it gives many felicitations; and as there is no harm about it, I do not see any cause for denouncing it. It has been a comfort to those whose burdens would have driven them to acts of desperation but for this consoling claim.

It is claimed by this same writer that the best moralist when trouble overrakes him will succumb to grief when he has not this spiritual help to sustain him. We are so different in our emotional natures and in our imaginations too, that we should not try to hinder magnanimity. Your skepticism will grieve Vina more than it does me, for she dearly loves the church and Sunday school.

I have not noticed that doctors are any more moral than preachers, and I might denounce their profession because some of

them "go wrong"—as did Dr. Crippen—as being unworthy of continuation on the same grounds that you belittle the churches. But what is the use?—for prejudice is almost as hard to get rid of—especially when it suits a certain purpose—as the color of one's hair.

When you name the men who have believed in monism—which is only another name for materialism—and show by their works that they have been as progressive and helpful to civilization as men who have believed in immortality and the good influence of the Higher Life, then it will be more consistent to proclaim your materialistic and agnostic views.

What you said about Political Freedom and universal education was very eloquent, but I should like to call your attention to the fact that these blessings have not given us *industrial freedom* yet, nor will they till there is an all-pervading goodness of heart,—such generous impulses as we are told come from the teachings of the Higher Life.

The power of thought, you contend, is purely a property of matter; but you neglected to say that matter does not produce thought only when there is a hidden force present. This hidden force redounds from one side of the earth to the other—either with or without wire—and perhaps throughout the universe: now are you prepared to say that all space occupies matter? More light, Dash, more light!

We had just as well dismiss the unknowable, and confine investigation to something we can see and feel.

The State Temperance Union is now in session, and it is worth the while of every good citizen to help maintain the good effects Prohibition has given Kansas. There is an organized effort among men who manufacture intoxicants, to use political influence to resubmit the law as soon as possible, on the ground that it will benefit the business of the State. The only business it can possibly benefit is the business of producing crime, making criminal

lawsuits, giving unscrupulous lawyers a better chance to start litigations; and all this at the expense of the peace and prosperity of the people.

The Liquor men are the worst enemies society has to contend with. Some of them claim there is more liquor sold in Kansas now than before the law was enacted. This is the most inconsistent claim they could make; for if it were true it would be to their interests to have prohibition established everywhere. Every man who has the welfare of his children to protect will oppose the traffic in every way he can. These enemies of society will not come out in the open and advocate their cause through the Kansas papers; but they will skulk into the unprotected places where dishonest, scheming politicians will give them aid to accomplish their vile plans among the ignorant and vicious voters.

Kansas needs Woman Suffrage with which to sustain the Prohibition law. Those who give Woman Suffrage any serious reflection, and are honest with themselves, must admit that the women are as intelligent and moral as the men are. This being true, what an influence for good is being wasted by keeping them away from what is due them,—the right to vote!

There are a great many unmarried men, most of them foreigners who work on the railroads and do street work in the cities, who have no homes here, who are here temporarily, who have no interest in our welfare,—all of whom will vote for liquor men.

Woman Suffrage would defeat this element.

LINA GONA.

## XI.

### QUOTING SCRIPTURE.

MISS GONA : I hold there can be no dignity without honesty. A deceitful manner may be taken for dignity, by which whole multitudes are made to uphold all kinds of absurdities. The absurdities contained in the Bible are without a parallel, and it is useless for me to try to believe this so-called divine revelation.

There was a time when men of good sense were excusable for believing the Bible to be something more than the thoughts of men ; but that time has passed, since the scientific works of Darwin, Huxley, and Haeckel, have become so universally read.

I bought \$150 worth of books, all of which are said to be standard works ; so I have information enough at hand to uphold any assertion I may make with dignified honesty, instead of using deceitful dignity as preachers are doing. I have loaned Miss Vintage some of these and asked her to read, if possible, without prejudice. You have said much which was beneficial to me, but I cannot surrender my personality or desert my convictions to win in a courtship, and if I fail in getting Miss V. to accept my views on all social, moral, religious, and political questions, I shall willingly leave her to a Christian union with whomsoever she may desire.

In considering the Christian religion, I desire to call your attention to Gen. ii, 17 : "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." If this account of the creation of man has anything in it, except myth, and superstition to uphold it, it is up to the Christian to look it up and present it. Nothing is

more untenable than this account of the creation of man, except it be the creation of woman: "And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." Gen. ii, 22.

Aside from the grammatical construction of this quotation, the dignity of the Lord God is belittled by a skillful account of surgery unknown to the scientists of this age, who will not indorse the rib story.

"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." Gen. iii: 8. To enter a disputation against this passage, it is only necessary to state that voices do not walk. If it had been stated that a wireless evidence of the presence of the Lord had caused them to hide themselves, it would have been more tenable.

"Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." Gen. iii: 21. The idea of the Lord God skinning sheep or goats, or whatever else, is giving his dignity a pretty hard strain; and to try to get people to believe such stuff in this day and age of the world, is a very elastic job, to say nothing of the outrage on honesty and dignity.

"Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." Gen. iii: 23. It would be useless to deny the passage, but this inquiry naturally arises: "How would it be possible for Adam to till the soil without tools?"

This account of the creation of the world is such a childish fabrication, that it is not worthy of a dignified consideration. It is based entirely on myth, superstition, and credulity.

As to the moral teachings of the Bible, reference is made to many precepts in the name of the Lord, or thus saith the Lord, all of which are disgusting to decent society and many of which

are too obscene to be allowed transmission through the U. S. mails.

Christ made wine for the people after they were already drunk. John ii: 3-11.

"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities." I. Timothy v: 23.

Read Jeremiah, xxv: 27, 28: "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Drink ye, and be drunken, and spew, and fall, and rise no more, because of the sword I will send among you. And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thine hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Ye shall certainly drink."

Many other passages encourage and sanction drunkenness. Matt. ii: 19; Isa. xxviii: 7, 8; Ezek. xxiii: 33, 34; Judges, ix: 13; Deut. xiv: 26; Ps. civ: 15; II. Sam. vi: 19, and xiv: 2; Chron. ii: 10; Eccl. ix: 7; Song of Solomon v: 1; Prov. iii: 10, and xxxi: 6, 7; Zech. ix: 17; Joel i: 5.

Slavery and all the cruelty connected with it get sanction in these passages: Lev. xxv: 44-46, x. xxi: 2-8, and in verses xx and xxi the cruelty finds sanction; Neh. v: 5; Joel iii: 8; I. Peter ii: 18; Eph. vi: 5; I. Tim. vi: 1.

Falsehoods and deceptions of every kind make a considerable part of what is called divine revelation. Refer to these: "If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet." Ezek. xiv: 9; I. Kings xxii: 20-23.

"God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie." II. Thes. ii: 1-3.

God rewards the midwives for their deception. Ex. i: 15-20. He also instructs Samuel to deceive. I. Sam. xvi: 20. God commanded Moses to deceive. Ex. iii: 18. Promiscuous lying. Gen. xviii: 25; Gen. xxvi: 7.

Christ taught in parables that he might deceive the people. Mark xiv: 11, 12. The Apostle Paul did no better. Rom. iii:

7; Jer. xx: 7, and xv: 18; Gen. xii: 13-19; xxix: 25; xxxi: 34, 35.

Theft, robbery and cheating have plenty of support in many passages. Gen. xx: 29-34; xxx: 30-43; xviii: 24.

Jacob was beloved by God, yet these deeds are the foundations of Christianity. Deut. xiv: 21; Numbers, 21st chapter; Josh. vi: 19-24; viii: 22-29; I. Samuel xxvii: 8-12.

No decent person would indorse Gen. xix: 8; Judges xix: 24-30. "O fools and slow of heart to believe all the prophets have spoken." Luke xxiv: 25. "If any man come unto me and hate not his father and mother, wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv: 26.

According to this, all the preachers and priests must hate all their relatives before they can be actual disciples of Christ.

The universal peace, love and good-will towards men, is here denounced in very plain terms. Is this the Christianity that claims to have civilized the world?

The world has become civilized because of such men as Darwin, Haeckel, Paine, Voltaire, Washington, Lincoln, Fulton, and Edison. These, with the hundreds of educators and scientists, together with the thousands of writers and publishers, are the real civilizers.

The teachings of the Bible have been more detrimental than instrumental in building up our state and national institutions.

Here are specimens: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather division." Luke xii: 51. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Matt. x: 35.

"Then said he unto them, but now, he that hath a purse, let

him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Luke xxii: 36.

"And he said unto them, unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables; that seeing they may see not to perceive; and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted and their sins should be forgiven them." Mark iv: 11, 12; St. John xii: 40.

Here is a scheme to entice men into eternal punishment. "He that believeth and be baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe."

"In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they take any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." Mark xvi: 16-18.

According to this there are none who can produce the testimony to prove that they are believers.

Credulity, ignorance and vagrancy are special virtues according to these: Matt. vi: 26-34; v: 25; v: 39; x: 20, 21.

Take any kind of abuse contradictory to the above, what follows indicates that the other extreme of foolishness and cruelty is acceptable in the law of the Lord: "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." Jer. xlviii: 10. "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents and shall cause them to be put to death." Matt. x: 20, 21. "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Put every man his sword by his side and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor." Ex. xxxii: 27.

"Spare them not, but slay every man and woman, infant and suckling." I. Sam. xv: 3. "Slay utterly both old and young,

both maids and little children." Ezek. ix: 6; Ex. ii: 12. I. Samuel xv: 32, 33; II. Kings ix: 33; Isa. xlv: 7.

For cruelty and hideous conduct in the name of the Lord God, there is nothing in the history of the most savage tribes any worse than these teachings. War is held to be very righteous, and the Bible says more in its praise than in condemnation, and says that God is a man of war. Ex. xv: 3.

"Of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them." Deut. xx: 16, 17.

"And they warred against the Midianites as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males. And the children of Israel took all the women captive, and their little ones." Numbers xxxi: 7-10. Then Moses the righteous man of God becomes angry, and gives this awful command: "Kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man, but all the women children that hath not known man by lying with him, keep for yourselves." Numbers xxxi: 17, 18; xxxiii: 52-55; Deut. ii: 24, 25, 34; iii: 36; Josh. vi: 2-21; Josh. xii: 24.

"I come not to send peace, but a sword." Matt. x: 34. "Happy shall he be that taketh thy little ones and dasheth them against the stones." Ps. xiii: 7-9. "Their children shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their homes spoiled, and their wives ravished." Isa. xiii: 15-18; Nah. iii: 10; Zech. xiv: 2; Hosea xiii: 16; II. Samuel xii: 15-18.

"I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children." Lev. xxvi: 22. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generations." Ex. xx: 5. "As the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in everything. Eph. v: 24. Wives, submit yourselves. Col.

iii: 18. Jer. xviii: 21; I. Cor. xiv: 34, 35; I. Peter iii: 1; I. Timothy ii: 11-14; I. Cor. vii: 36, Ex. xxi: 7, 8.

The commands given in some of these passages are the lowest kind of crimes. Judges xxi: 50-23; Deut. xxi: 10-14; xxiv: 1. It is strange that women can read heinous crimes allowed by Holy Writ, against themselves, and still consider the Bible the best of all books. Prov. xxi: 10.

"Thus saith the Lord: I will rise up against thee, out of thine own, and I will take thy wives before thine own eyes, and give them to thy neighbor, and he shall lie with them in the sight of the sun." II. Samuel xii: 13. The sanction of human sacrifice and cannibalism. Jud. xi: 26-40; II. Samuel xii: 13. "And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and your daughters ye shall eat." Lev. xxvi: 9.

"Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." St. John vi: 53.

If all the obscene, disgusting passages in the Bible were excluded, it would be more respectable, but still depravity and falsehood and superstition are so evident, that it is not decent enough to make good every-day reading, because of the outrageous lies. Numbers xi: 31; II. Chron. xxviii: 6; Rev. xii: 3, 4; Col. ii: 8; Cor. viii: 1.

Christians are good only because they are so closely associated with the wisdom of science, and not because of the teachings of the Bible, which kept civilization in war for many centuries; and if this civilization with all of its masterful accomplishments degenerates into the conditions which prevailed during the dark, bloody ages after the fall of the Roman Empire, it will be because of the teachings of the Bible. Many church-goers never take any interest in the Bible, because it does not contain the information applicable to this age.

It is not in keeping with harmony to say much in opposition to the Bible; but I desire to present enough herein, all of which I

desire to have you and Vina discuss together,—for she tells me she is going to spend a month or two with you as soon as she has the opportunity,—to convince you both that the Bible is altogether the product of human beings, the same as all other books, and that there is nothing divine or supernatural about it.

“The peace habitations are cut down because of the fierce anger of the Lord.” Jer. xxv: 37.

“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.” Rev. xxii: 11.

“If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.” I. Cor. xiv: 28; Matt. x: 16; Eccl. i: 18.

Here are many passages that are too obscene to go through the U. S. mails: Isa. iii: 17; xlvii: 3; Nah. iii: 5, 6; Jer. xiii: 22–26; Ezek. xvi: 37–40; Gen., 38th chapter; Ezek., 16th chapter; Gen. xix: 30–38; xx: 18–25, 26; Ex. xxiii: 23; Lev. xv: 16–33; Deut. xxiii: 1–13; xxv: 11, 12; I. Samuel xxv: 22; II. Samuel xi: 2–5; I. Kings xiv: 10; xvi: 11; xxi: 21; II. Kings ix: 8; Job xl: 16, 17; Sol. Song vii: 2, 3; Ezek. xxiii: 3; Luke i: 41–44; Rom. i, 26, 27.

The story of Jonah. Matt. xii: 14; Matt. xxvii: 57–62; Mark xvi: 12, and the ascension of Christ, are contradictory and too extravagant for men of this age to believe.

Such foolish facts as the genealogies of Christ, given in Matt., first and second chapters, and Luke in chapter third, are in accord with monstrous stories in II. Chron. xxviii: 6; Num. xi: 31; Psalms lxxviii: 27; Mark vii: 23; Matt. xvii: 21; xxi: 22; Jud. i: 19.

“The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God’s service.” St. John xvi: 2; Mark xii: 27; Joel iii: 10; Ex. xxxii: 27.

In pointed contradictions the Bible certainly takes first prize. “The strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent, for he is not a man that he should repent.” I. Samuel xv: 29; xxxiv: 36.

"Those that seek me early shall find me." Prov. viii: 17.

"They shall seek me early but shall not find me." Prov. i: 27.

"He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness." Mark iii: 29; Acts xiii: 39.

Elisha went to heaven. II. Kings xii: 11. "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that cometh down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." St. John iii: 13.

Luke xix: 29-34 leaves a bad record of Jesus.

God makes robbers prosperous: Job xii: 16.

He also creates and brings evils: Isa. xlv: 7; Jer. xi: 11; xiv: 12. The Lord sent lions and hornets: Ex. xxiii: 28; Sol. Song viii: 8; and Ezek. xxiii: 3.

"I will heap mischief upon the people's heads." Deut. xxxii: 22-25; Ps. xviii: 7-10; I. Kings i: 2.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." II. Tim. iii: 16. So everything herein referred to is direct from God. Joshua cut men's noses off so God would know them when they got to heaven: v: 5-2.

If Christians like to read such old trash as the Bible contains, of course they should be allowed the privilege.

Pope said a wonderful thing when he uttered this: "All are parts of a stupendous whole, whose body nature is, and God the soul."

Now this opens a new conclusion. All creation, the whole universe, is nature; and all the force, energy, thought and all abstractions whatsoever connected with this universe make what Pope says is God; then I shall have to admit, after all, that the Bible is a part of the word of God; and a very inferior part—so inferior that compared with other books it is not worthy of the room it occupies.

In my youthful days I attended Sunday school and belonged to a Bible class; and the most tiresome intellectual trials I ever encountered were connected with the Bible class. A nice, pleas-

ant young woman, out of respect for whom I withhold a pretty name, gave instructions and pretended to understand the applications of the tiresome chapters which were analyzed at the country church.

All the good that came from those Bible classes that I could see was, that it gave the young people a chance to get together and create courtships. They never took enough interest in the Bible lessons to discuss them among themselves.

During recitations most of the class acted like they thought they were going through forms of foolishness, but out of respect for each other and their pious parents they tried to believe there was something superior in these Sunday schools as compared to the day schools; but it was very noticeable that they did not enter into the study of the Bible with the same sagacious energy which was everywhere in evidence. In those days I could not understand the cause of the indifference toward the Sunday school lessons; but now I can plainly see that it was because a false estimation was everywhere placed upon the contents of the Bible.

It was considered very, very wicked to question any of the statements in the Bible, but the young people noticed that the different denominations would wrangle a good deal over the meaning of certain passages; this disagreement often led to neighborhood disturbances.

I am satisfied there would have been a good deal more harmony if there had only been one denomination. But rivalry in church as everywhere else gave the ambitious young preachers a chance to work with more animation, and it also made a greater demand for the most useless of all professional men. The saving of souls is an innocuous desuetude so lucid and lasting in its mysticism, so profound and penetrating in its explanation, and so important and eternal in its usefulness, that a great many

loquacious theologians have found this popular means of being pious very profitable.

No doubt some of them are very honest in their work.

The law of substance with the space-filling ether, the animalculæ, science and the cellular philosophy demonstrated in evolution, showing that the soul and body exist as one only, has a beginning and ending in cellular transformation, is too complicated, —yes, this law of substance is too complex in its details for a theologian to comprehend.

The light of science has sounded the shallowness of orthodoxy, and of course the laymen will have to learn it without help from the preacher, who is not to blame. He can only comprehend so much; besides, he cannot violate policy.

Helen Kellar, one of the most remarkable beings, says on page 112, in the "Story of My Life": "I dearly love the Bible; still there is much in the Bible which every instinct of my being rebels so much, that I regret the necessity which has compelled me to read it through from beginning to end. I do not think the knowledge which I have gained of its history and its source compensate me for the unpleasant details it has placed upon me. For my part, I wish with Mr. Howells, that the literature of the past might be purged of all that is ugly and barbarous in it." Why does this poor blind woman dearly love the Bible if she thinks she has not been compensated because of the rebellious, unpleasant details connected with it? I can only account for her statement on the supposition that she has not yet discovered that it is utterly false in what it is claimed to be by those who call themselves eminent divines.

The Gifford Lectures, by Max Müller, show beyond contradiction that the best sentiments in the Bible are found in the Veda, and Talmud, which books were the guides in religious teachings before Christ.

*Comparative Theology*, traced in these centuries by a man who

claims to be a Christian, leaves Christianity without any more divine origin than any other book. So at last the very men (it is absurd to call them divines) have shown that all religions which require prayer and worship, originated in the ignorant superstition of a prehistoric age.

Scientific truths, capable of demonstration, are better for sociology than any of the established religions; and if it were not for those truths all the different Christian religions would be as slavish and destructive of human liberty as they were in the Dark Ages.

There is enough money wasted in building churches and hiring preachers to provide homes for all the poverty-stricken on the face of the globe. The coming civilization, if all the various church-building religions can be kept out of state management, will be so superior to this civilization that there will be no poor, deluded wretches wedded to the belief that it is "God's will" that they must drudge and toil to sustain churches and preachers.

I have done without tobacco and wine long enough to have been convinced that they are evils which should no longer be tolerated, and I am going to allow you the credit of this change in my habits of living. I find that my mind is more clear and active, and that my body is more supple, and has more endurance.

I shall answer your good, long lectures more fully next time I write. Your friendship is worth more to me in this stage of my existence than I can compute, for it has created a desire to read and study.

The automobile is losing its attraction, excepting as a utility.

DASH BLANK.

## XII.

### A WARNING, AND A THREAT TO PUBLISH QUOTATIONS.

MR. BLANK: Our relation to each other in its literary worth (if it has any) may be a part of a book sometime; so the radical views you express are apt to come under the eyes of your children if you should be so fortunate as to have any; being aware of this, you may be more careful in what you say. According to our private verbal agreement in which you offered to sustain any financial need that might come to me in case I should attempt literature as a means of being independent in old age, I feel obliged to be as lenient, careful, and candid as I can.

This is Christmas week, and Vina is with me. Your letter, which she defines as a reckless essay, has been under discussion, and contempt. She says it seems incredible that one as intelligent as you ought to be, considering the chance you have had, would write such a "dejectable mixture." The books you have given her to read, she says, are so full of scientific terms that she cannot understand their meaning; and she intends to put off the wedding day till she learns all about theology, anthropology, cosmography, and the Nebular Hypothesis.

We have been searching for those references, many of which prove the corruptibility of the mind of the person who would seek them out, instead of reading and dwelling on the beautiful verses found in so many places in the Bible. God had to present the low and degraded in order to give strength and appreciation to the grand, noble, beautiful revelations; and so far as either of us is concerned, we would rather the Bible did not contain some of

those verses ; but even then, it would not be so forcible in bringing evil spirits into a reflection whereby we might shun them.

Your scoffing at the book that has been believed for ages to be the divine authority will not change its authenticity. The good and bad, the high and low, the evil and just, are necessarily mixed in creation, and you might learn a good lesson from the monkey in the tree : it gathered and ate the nice, juicy fruit and would not so much as soil its fingers with the decayed, filthy parts of the product. I am giving you the argument as *Vina* dictates it. She claims translation might have been imperfect, and says you should judge the tree by the good fruit it bears, and refers you to the people who patronize the churches as compared to those who disbelieve in them, those who drink, gamble, steal, lie, murder, and bear false witness.

Until you can show a better class of disbelievers than believers, your scoffing will have no effect. Most of the people who hold the high responsible positions of school and state support the churches, even though they see weakness in the doctrines. No person is made worse by believing in eternal life, and to believe that a reward is in store for all those who are faithful has helped many a poor patient soul to strive on, endure pain and hardship and live a much better life than he would have lived without his belief.

You are only making yourself unpopular and disgusting to attack the churches. If the doctrines of the church are not in accord with scientific achievements, those doctrines will not retard the growth of further scientific investigations, even if the discrepancies are not publicly discussed. It is poor policy to denounce religion simply because science has some investigators who do not make a profession of faith in the Bible.

You speak of preachers making use of a "deceitful dignity" in their church work ; I must say I have never seen any of it. Any tirade made against a professional man for supporting a cause in which he has a living, and in which he believes there is a

good moral effect on the community, is unworthy of a man, no matter how honest he may be in his convictions.

This first day of January, 1911, I have a copy of the *Appeal to Reason*, which as good as charges the officials of our great country, at Washington, with malice in bringing suit against Fred Warren, with a view to suppress, or at least intimidate Warren, the editor. Warren has been convicted, sentenced to jail, and to pay a fine of \$1500.

The facts are that Warren was instrumental in freeing Moyer, Heywood, and Pettibone, who had been kidnapped by officials in Colorado and taken to Idaho for trial. During this trial, or shortly after, he offered a reward for the return of an ex-governor of Kentucky through the same processes practiced upon Moyer, Heywood and Pettibone; and for offering this reward the officials gave vent to the malice which has lodged him in jail. The judge who pronounced the sentence did it on the technicality of it having been "scurrilous and defamatory to the character of the ex-governor"—who was hiding from justice—for the reward to be placed on a postal card which went through the mails.

To think that the high officials of our government, through prejudiced judges, would seek to humiliate and persecute the publisher of a paper not in accord with their views, and thus belittle themselves as well as dishonor their high offices, seems almost incredible; but they did it, and as a consequence of having done it, they ought to be sentenced to political oblivion.

It would have been bad enough for some local politician who had no office, to have urged the prosecution, but for one in high authority to do such a low, mean thing, is enough to blacken his record forever. What troubles me more than anything else is: Did Roosevelt, the idol of the world, have anything to do with this outrageous deed? I have seen Warren, and heard him speak; concluded he was an extremist, but not by any means a criminal. His neighbors and fellow-citizens claim he is a model

husband and father, and has the sympathy and confidence of the whole town of Girard, and the whole force of his publications, as well as the good citizens and neighbors, are going to loyally proclaim his innocence of any crime.

This leads me into an investigation of his life and work. Mr. Roosevelt has been the most honored American citizen of the last decade, and I am not ready to believe that he would abuse our free institutions of justice and progression in order to cast reflections on any opposing political party.

Some defects of our social compact solicit the writers of this age to give a very deliberate analysis of our overcrowded cities—not that there is not sufficient house-room in the cities, for in the resident portions of every city there are magnificent, splendid homes containing from eight to twenty rooms and more, finely furnished, and yet vacant. Overcrowded the cities are, because there is not lucrative employment to give these workers a decent living. Some of these vacant, nicely furnished rooms might be rented. But no, they were not made to give comfort and protection to human beings, but were made to display the vanity of despoilers, and in some cases to shelter pet dogs, and not to be rented to those who are huddled together in foul, vice-breeding shacks, devoid of all sanitary conveniences.

A proposed relief is to get back to the land and help produce food, instead of consuming it; but there is no feasible way of getting the surplus product of humanity back to the land with the assurance of any comfort, for those who own the large vacant houses in the cities also own the land, or have options on it through real-estate companies,—a better name for these would be modern slave organizations,—which have legal facilities for putting the surplus product of humanity on just as short rations out on the farm land as they have in the cities.

Maybe the Socialists are right in a degree, after all. Maybe it would be better for the government to confiscate all the land,

except those small and medium-sized farms upon which the owners reside, and give this surplus product of humanity a chance to till the soil for the State, or, in other words, for themselves.

If not, why not? The Supreme Being made the land.

Anything like such a confiscation would create such a commotion that society would hardly survive, even if it were done by a popular vote of the people, unless a well-defined provision were outlined in such a clear manner that the average individual could comprehend it. This provision would necessarily have to be made popular by a small degree of application to make it proficient and permanent, and instead of a sweeping confiscation it seems the better way would be for the State to commence the reconstruction of society by buying a considerable tract of land—not at the present inflated, speculative values, but on a physical valuation, to be determined by the improvements thereon and natural fertility of the soil; condemn it for further private use, regardless of what the owner might demand, and thus start the employment of those who have jobs which are insufficiently remunerative, to enable them to supply themselves with all the comforts which these times of enlarged production ought to afford to every one willing to work. In using such condemned land to employ surplus laborers, as an agricultural experiment, would be a substantial move against private exploitation.

So much of the State's work in the agricultural line at present done by the State Agricultural College at Manhattan, is unsatisfactory to a great many thoughtful farmers. Such institutions ought to be self-sustaining, or at least no further aid given. Only a very few have derived any benefit from this top-heavy, high-salaried, extravagant public institution. If a tuition were charged sufficient to make it self-supporting, so that those who are benefitted by attending it would pay for what they get, and the high salaries regulated so that any further appropriations would be unnecessary, we might make a starting-point from this

college toward State-wide employment. The way it is now managed, just a few are benefitted at the expense of those who are compelled by their limited circumstances to provide for the education of their children nearer home.

The Agricultural College professors are apt to run the same kind of humbuggery on the taxpayer that the farmers of Kansas were fooled with when the chinch-bug inoculation went abroad from the K. U.

Old Uncle Cy. Leland said he disbelieved its utility, long before the farmers had to admit that there was nothing in it. If Kansas is going to employ a lot of high-salaried men to conduct agricultural industries, the State should provide land to give practical, self-supporting employment to all those who patronize such institutions, and let the plants to the professors as a business proposition on condition that they pay a two- or three-per-cent interest on the physical valuation of the plants.

If Kansas should furnish a young man with a quarter-section of land, well improved, on condition that he pay the State a low rate of interest on the physical valuation of said land, out of which interest the State would supply school facilities, road improvements, etc., this young man would be a self-supporting, self-respecting, independent, self-sustaining citizen.

But if in addition to this the State should pay him a salary of \$1,500 a year, or more, like it does the Manhattan managers, for a few long-winded contributions to agricultural literature, most people would say the State was managed by a set of fools to thus allow the young man a salary the equivalent of which in compensation was in no way returned to the State.

No State Agricultural College for experimental purposes needs to be one half as large and commodious as the one at Manhattan, and in many cases the boys who have had no other chance than the common schools have outranked the graduates of that college in all the industries. So it is evident that these top-heavy institutions

of Kansas have become a public burden, and they foster a lot of salaried men who do not compensate the State or society for the worth of their salaries.

The local public schools are not getting the support they should, because of these over-developed State institutions; over-developed because they are not giving the citizens an adequate return for the amount of appropriations they are consuming.

Everything the State does economically, to benefit the whole of society, should be encouraged, but helping some at the expense of others is a paternalism that must be discontinued.

If the civilized people of the world would act harmoniously on sociology, biology, theology, and ethnology, they could get on a basis of government whereby war, with all of its extravagant and hideous results, would be abolished; and with our present facilities of transferring information and products the conditions are favorable to have a United Government of the World to settle international contentions.

Everything harmful and oppressive will continue till the legal rights of property-holders are limited to where they will not conflict with the right of every person to be employed at a remuneration sufficient to afford all the comforts and advantages commensurate with modern facilities of production and distribution.

The enlightenment of this age is propitious for a much better civilization than we now have; but so long as society expends its forces in building mansions for the rich and hovels for the poor, enabling and encouraging the rich to idle their lives away and compelling the poor to suffer and destroy their vitalities by the hardships of starvation or exposure to the elements, causing a general discouragement which produces crime in all its horrible forms; and so long as society expends so much of its accumulated wealth in preparation for defense and possible war,—just so long will human misery be unnecessarily prevalent, and happiness be-

yond the possibility of being attained permanently in its maximum degree for all classes of society.

The newspaper men of Kansas are generally so loyal to the policy of their papers—which policy is to say nothing through the papers which will in any manner prevent the largest circulation—that public evils get into a popular acceptance by being supported by those who are living on the fixed salaries of State and county offices: thus it is that the taxpayers do not get properly informed in regard to many public institutions.

Newspapers almost without exception are reflections of what is popular with salaried people. This and criminal news they generally get before the public without palliation; but whenever anything comes up directly unjust to the taxpayers, anything in which more salaries are created, the taxpayers do not get a fair presentation; to these facts I want to make one or two exceptions.

The Atchison *Globe*, under the management of Mr. Ed Howe, has been fearless and fair.

The only thing that *The Globe* leaves its patrons in doubt about is the editor's religion; in this, many believe he is fair too; they say, possibly he has none. However this may be, we all regretted to hear last week that this most able paragrapher is going to retire. There was something about this man's writings that made subjects of local import readable and interesting anywhere in the United States. This may have been because he was without the trouble-making convictions of any special religion.

The only religion which will be of universal acceptance is the religion of being good without a lot of salaried men to tell how worship must be conducted.

Salaries and worship in the civil and religious efforts of men—Hero worship in one, and God worship in the other—have been serious hindrances in all countries; these hindrances we do not seem to know how to avoid. If it were possible to satisfy office-holders with glory, and a fixed salary not to exceed \$5000 per

year for services of the highest offices in the United States, nor to receive less than \$1000 for the lowest, there would likely be much less corruption and scheming in office as well as in elections.

Our systems, as they now operate, encourage extravagance in public life; so it is a sad reflection we see in the Associated Press; a reflection where scandals in high life, divorces, breach of promises, embezzlements, suicides, murder, and elopements; and in lower life, we see poverty, disease, crime, cruelty, ignorance, oppression, and robberies; and more yet, we see the natural resources of the country, the land, the mines, the oil wells, the sugar plants, in fact all industries, more or less monopolized by corporations or private ownership; this reflection is too much. I shall have to turn away from the Associated Press, the main factor in making the people believe we are making wonderful progress in civil government; it, the Press, needs further investigation in its copyright efforts to maintain prestige over the people.

The Associated Press has copyrighted all kinds of nicely finished, perfectly moral love stories to pacify the young people and imbue them with the idea that a condition of bliss is in store for them if they remain loyal to the powers which hold the reins of government.

These stories are copyrighted and culled, for book publications, and circulated as choice literature to engage the attention of any whose thoughts might drift to causes of so much misery and crime recorded in the daily papers.

The policy of the Press is to inform the electors in the political arena what wonderfully capable men those are who aspire to be the servants of a people who govern by supreme authority. What a travesty on the "land of the free and the home of the brave"—*riotous* and *free* for the *work* of the *knave* who builds residences like the Montana Senator, would be nearer right.

When you buy a house or farm that will rent for \$500 a year you are really buying the services of a stout, able-bodied man who

never gets sick or cold, who never dies ; such a purchase gives you more than the average laborer could earn above his expenses.

Slavery? What else can it be? It is a thousand times better than the old-time chattel slavery. You are so eminently respectable in this deal.

I thought some of trying to revive my sentimental feeling toward you, for I am almost sure your courtship with Vina will be a failure. When she speaks of you now, she calls you the infidel scoffer. Topeka has a scoffer, one of the most brilliant in the State ; he is a satellite in the Second Thought department of the *Daily Capital*. Last week Mr. Ed. Howe retired from the *Atchison Globe*.

In the spring he is going to move to Potato Hill, to show the farmers as well as the town people how to fill the declining years with happiness. Poor Mr. Howe! I wish I could in some way contribute to his comfort—and I can, by leaving him alone.

Vina thinks your writing would be more readable if the personal pronoun, I, were not so prominent. She takes a very consistent stand in this, I think. She says, even according to your doctrine, that we are indebted to thousands of people now in their graves, for our mental accomplishments ; and that when we write we should say *we* more and not try to convey the impression that “*I* am the author of all the learning which I display.”

LINA GONA.

### XIII.

#### DASH SANCTIONS THE PUBLICATION.

TO MISS GONA: Your intimation that the thoughts which I express may be part of the material for a book, does not in any way disconcert me; in fact, I am rather pleased to know that you recognize sufficient force in them to create public concern.

It is an old theory that one should not endeavor to build up by tearing down; there is no virtue in this theory when that which is false is in the way of that which is true. "Do unto others as ye would have others do unto you:" even this moral precept does not hold good when an anti-prohibitionist, with plenty of "wet goods," meets another man of the same type and proceeds to do unto him as he would like to be done by. In this case both may proceed to get beastly drunk by obeying the moral precept. Today I met an old friend who offered me a cigar. I explained to him that it was not always best to do unto others as he would have others do unto him; that it often encouraged bad habits; that it all depended on the doer and the doee. He was a man of easy persuasion, and readily understood.

If the Christian religion, or any other, or any number of religions, are in the way of building up the most perfect civilization, it is the duty of all progressive citizens to investigate, and by all peaceable methods remove error and establish truth. To cultivate harmony at the expense of truth may cause violent social eruptions. It was preached before the Civil War and is yet preached in a religious way, "obey your masters," but the evil was so great that human reason could not harmonize it.

The evils which are burdensome to society now are more the result of ignorance of its individual members, than it is the result

of intentional injustice by those who are conducting the powers of the social system. There has been so much attention given—and wasted—on religion that the ethical knowledge of how to be good and happy has been ineffectual; hence the horrors you behold may be permeating to the very vitals of our social compact.

A religion that teaches that an all-wise, all-powerful, merciful God is watching over the human family, is so bewildering to the mind of a child when he sees the effect of drouths, earthquakes, conflagrations, and destructive storms, that he loses confidence in the wisdom of such a ruler for guidance and help; when he does not get help he becomes discouraged and criminally inclined. He becomes reckless, selfish, and determined. If he succeeds in any vocation he is apt to turn towards his childhood religion and pray for power, and does not hesitate to use it in every legal way possible; but if he fails to get above the lower vocations, and has hardships and privations to contend with, he either becomes a meek, servile tool, willing to serve his masters, or he becomes a criminal of the most vile known, and does not hesitate to murder, rob, steal, and do everything mean, to the extent of his ability.

Does it not seem if the child had been taught the ethical knowledge that mercy and moral courage come direct from society, and the unyielding laws of nature, and that the proper and safe thing to do is to conform to the ethical guidance, and be prosperous in proportion to the ability he can command and extend?

The only safe place to act is within one's own reason, in the acquisition of all that it takes to make us useful and happy; and to wander away from the good we find in our own reason, in an endeavor to connect with a personal God, is a species of mysticism that has been harmful to many a wavering child.

That was a good point, 'n Vina's favor too, which she made concerning the pronoun, I. None of us are inclined to give the past ages the credit we should for the achievements we now enjoy; so after this I shall say *we*.

When sociology develops to that point of perfection wherein each individual realizes that he is dependent morally, physically and mentally, and that he cannot fill his mission nor attain the greatest happiness and contentment till he contributes his share, then there is a possibility of attaining a social system in which more harmony will prevail; then a code of ethical morals acceptable to all peoples would establish universal peace among men. Such a condition has been the earnest desire of the best men for many ages; and this may be cherished and cultivated until we will have been successful.

Evolution has given us more encouragement for such a social development than all the religions; its laws seem to be tenable throughout all creation.

The gradual advance from a rudimentary condition to a higher, more complex, and a more perfect form is as evident in the sociology of this age as it is evident in plant development and life development of the lower forms of animals.

In the science of evolution we have a basic principle to prove the stability of such a development without any form of worship or religion.

H. W. Dresser, in his "Power of Silence," comes nearest harmonizing evolution with religion. His platitudes are so skillfully applied that the unsophisticated men of God will accept it as a proof that they ought to continue to pray and worship God on bended knee, or in the more modern style, stand up, close the eyes, and use a pious tone.

Dresser says, "evolution would have no ultimate meaning if it did not prove the presence of God."

The man to whom we are indebted for the science and those who explain its principles do not acknowledge the presence of God. The *truth* is the presence which they establish.

Such platitudes as these: "Life is immanent; God is manifested in all life; God is life; life is God. There is no place where

God is not ; wherever there is life there is God." According to these assertions, God must be in a snake, and a snake must be in God, for a snake surely has life. God must be in the penitentiaries, the asylums, the jails ; He must be in the robbers, the murderers, the thieves,—for there is certainly life in all these.

We are hopeful that truth will be triumphant. We know that good and bad have opposite meanings ; and that nature does not need a God to oversee her laws. The word God has always been a source of bewilderment. We never know where He is, where He is not, and all his deeds have been sources of contention.

Mrs. Eddy, the most wonderful woman of her age, in point of success in sustaining Christianity in its last struggles against science, says "God is Love." Then she soars : "Time may commence, but it cannot complete the new birth, eternity does this ; for progress is the law of Infinity. Only through the sore travail of mortal mind shall soul, or sense, be satisfied, and man awake in His likeness. What a faith-lighted thought is this : that mortals can lay off the 'old man' until man is found to be the image of the Infinite Good, which we call God." She wrote pages and pages of this kind of inspiration, believing it to be a new dispensation of the divine law in complete harmony with science. Take her work as a whole, and it is about as lucid as this : that which is not, is not exactly the same as that which was, but that which was is nearer right than that which has been, though that which has been was the beginning of that which will be perfectly evident to all the deep recesses of the Divine Science. Until such meaningless flights of fancy, written for the purpose of bewildering those who have not confidence enough in themselves to do their own thinking, is discarded in the progress of sociology, there will be that ease-loving element, the preachers and the priests, to support ; these, with all the burdensome begging foreign missions and churches, together with the Y. M. C. A.'s, are hindering sociology more than anything else except liquor and tobacco.

Every person has some fear attached to his dependence. He has not the intrepid moral courage to proclaim his judgment in the face of those who are upholding dogmas which have been, and are yet, with the majority, popular even when science sustains him in every analysis. It is so hard to question our beliefs which were established by our school-books and indorsed by our parents.

Sometimes fear is so dominant that we cling to our prejudices when there are no logical reasons for doing so; this is because social ostracism has been served to many who dared to doubt an established religion. The discoverer of a fraud practiced on a credulous public would rather be a quiet observer than create the enmity of those upon whom the fraud is practiced; thus we sit quiet in legislative assemblies while a chaplain talks to God. Most of us are of the opinion that such talks are as foolish and ineffectual as the heathen praying to his wooden god, but none of us feel like sacrificing our social positions by exposing or even intimating that the chaplain does not earn his salary.

However, there is much evidence in course of accumulation, that chaplains, preachers and priests work these frauds on a dollar basis. Christian civilization exposes its absurdities when two powers declare war, and both pray to the same God for guidance; so the evolution of sociology yet has all marks of a cruel, selfish religion, while the individual members are striving for a growth, a development, which will discontinue everything except that which is known to be good and beneficial to all,—just simply *good*, without any high-salaried men to tell why it is good.

In the civil laws sociology has a support more permanent than ever before, because religion has been so far supplanted by science that men take little interest in preaching; and they also take less interest in what is said in opposition to it. We have to endure certain beliefs much the same as we do our physical defects. We inherited them, and till we can evolve out of these beliefs as a whole compact (for keep in mind, society is one thing

in course of development and has not attained anything like a full development), we must endure them because some of our fellows cannot see how utterly useless and false they are.

There are times in every matured person's life when the clouds of despondency cluster so closely around that he would gladly go into oblivion except that pain, fear and suffering make a barrier too great for his courage; thus it is that the dread of suffering makes us take new courage to strive for pleasure and happiness. We come now to realize how essential the discordant things are in the economy of evolution.

Step by step we are able to convince ourselves that there is mind-power sufficient to elevate us to a higher development; and to cultivate this mind-power, we compare human life with the creeping, crawling life of reptiles and beasts. This comparison convinces us that we must depend on science; so psychology, when we come to understand its uses and powers, is vastly more beneficial than religion and the debasing worship which is humiliating because of the sycophantic procedure in teaching that we are low, vile sinners, born of evil and unworthy of the Blessed Master.

The man who follows his ethical resources does not feel inferior, from a moral point of view, to any being who ever lived; he may feel inferior in mental capacity, but not in moral worth, except as he inherits the degrading effects of a superstitious religion.

To be able to shift your thoughts from a physical burden, to some mental activity which requires deep, earnest discernment, you acquire and strengthen the mental equilibrium which psychology offers to serve humanity in the place of religious zeal. This mind-power is the power behind the throne of sociology.

This mind-power is so highly attenuated in self-consciousness, and so permeating in its application to matter and ethereal substance, that it responds to human desires and needs, all the self-

help which gives us energy and discernment from the cradle to the grave. Nature gives it. Nature takes it. The rudiments of mind-power are also the rudiments in cellular diversity through all forms of life. Nature is the great Reality; and God is only an invention of a mystical age, and this invention still serves the purpose among learned men to make a display. This invention does not, and never did, respond to the call of man; all that men believed to have come from this source came from Nature, not as a result of the call, but as the result of the call being in the way of her laws.

The prayers of a man to God are as futile as the most menial fib. All man's trials and achievements are with nature. The old mystic invention, God, was the result of a pitiful ignorance. Evolution was never dreamed of in those days. Spiritual Power is another misnomer, the origin of which belongs to the God invention; the mind-power includes everything there is of it, with all the befogged mysticism excluded.

We have learned that we can live good, useful, moral lives, without the "spiritual guidance" and God-worship which are the assets by which a lot of useless idlers live.

Psychology, in its modern application to disease and distress, has prayer and "spiritual guidance" exposed to the light of science so completely that we marvel at the stupidity of those who can be so credulous as to believe in these old, time-worn contrivances.

The restorative power in the physical evolutionary phenomena which the Christian Scientist mistakes for "divine healing," is doing everything that can be done without the depressing burden of prayer. Each successive age gives us a better understanding of how to be good without God, that nonentity which has been used so long to mystify the laws of Nature. The real Creator of the Universe is *Nature* and her laws, a feminine personification to accommodate some who dislike to give up the defunct god idea.

What we learn by experience transcends every other kind of knowledge; and those of us who have learned that prayer and worship have consumed enough time to have developed sociology and psychology to a point of perfection worthy of the scientific discoveries of this age, are now impatient for progress.

The opinion we get from experience through psychology, leads us out of those phenomenal mysteries which Spiritualists have mistaken for departed souls, nonentities. However, these are ridiculed by Christians, generally, as being fakes, because churches and preachers are not necessary to establish a following.

Any subject over which the mind becomes enthused, tends to become intensified in proportion to attention given it, and some minds, very susceptible to excitement, create a circulation of thought-power which creates delusions among those not well poised; and even among the most perfectly poised there are impressions of phenomena similar to the agitation between wireless telegraphic instruments; but there is nothing supernatural or divine about it.

No doubt there is a curative influence created in the imagination, but this curative influence will not do the work of physic, nor be safe to depend upon in malignant diseases; it is Nature's first effort to help recover, and those who depend wholly on it are mentally out of balance.

The sensuous, the sagacious and sensual comprise all the various kinds of human beings.

Those in whom the sensuous proclivities predominate get most of their pleasure from seeing, hearing, and knowing. They are easily influenced and often make good scholars, but they are not the influential in times of great stress.

The sagacious are those who have the sensuous and the sensual proclivities in equal proportions; they are not easily disturbed, nor do they become greatly moved by music or scenery. Their pleasures come from executive sources as managers of great enter-

prises and legislative assemblies; they are at the front in all the great movements.

Those who are sensual to a dominant degree care more for the pleasures of taste, and the carnal proclivities lead them into crime; they get more pleasure from the muscles than they do from the mind; evolution has not done any more for these, in point of morality, than it has done for the lower animals. Most criminals belong to this class, and sociology has not yet learned how to deal with them. They often become deeply religious, after they have led a life of crime; and, being ignorant, they honestly accept the god idea of making amends through repentance and prayer.

Through heredity this class of beings occupied the thrones, and humanity has not entirely recovered from the bad influences. It is hard to appeal to this class of beings, for their minds are prejudiced in favor of the Bible, kings, priests and preachers.

Whenever they get into power they find so much precedent to refer to, that they become tyrants in their homes, as well as in public capacities. They are the people who believe in war, and pray for victory in his blessed name. They are not modern and progressive.

Another fake, false as false can be, is the *divine dispensation of Providence*, which has hindered the progress of human intelligence for thousands of years. It is written by a preacher that in April, 1865, God, by divine providence, called Lincoln from this earth. If this be the truth, then this same God was operating with Booth, when he shot the President. If any low-lived criminal should shoot our Governor, there are a host of those pastors who would claim that it was the will of God, divine providence, being fulfilled. Such preachers are just a grade above the religious crank who claims it is the fulfilling of a divine dispensation that called for the murder of President McKinley.

In the awful conflagration like the burning of Chicago and San Francisco, these same mystical, illogical freaks say God willed it.

The unchangeable laws of nature do everything, and God does nothing. There is no such thing as a God, if we except the wooden and metallic gods created by the superstitious worshipers.

In view of the fact that churches are a burden upon society and hinder progression, we need some legislation to counteract this burden; the repeal of the old law which exempts church property from taxation, would be in the line of progress. In every city of any size there are large churches which represent thousands of dollars invested; they should be taxed the same as other property; and the chaplains ought to be excluded from our legislative assemblies and military organizations. Their influence with God is a travesty on good sense. They have wasted enough energy in the foolish God business to have relieved society of the evils of tobacco and liquor, both of which are only a little more burdensome than the churches.

The "So help me God" clause in the courts of justice should be supplanted with "So help me truth and honesty."

In the oath of office and everywhere the God-idea should have the *good idea* of truth, honesty and good service take its place. It is obsolete, considered as sense, and has no more force from a progressive point of view than "So help me Satan" would have. God and Satan—two fakes, two nonentities, nowhere of any use, and everywhere hindering the ignorant and vicious from being as good as they would be if science and ethical morality were given the same amount of study, support, and attention.

Morality based on ethics, instead of on hell, heaven, God and the Devil, and taught in our common schools as a hygienic and moral necessity, would create a capacity for doing good and being good, that would enable sociology to rank with chemistry and electricity.

Sociology is no further advanced, except as the other sciences have helped it, than it was one hundred years ago. Crime, superstition, poverty and affluence leave their cancerous scars on the

history we are making today, that makes the past ages so horrible to contemplate,—all because religion has kept humanity, except a few scientists, enshrouded in a moldy, mystical, god-ridden superstition. We need the light of science and the force of reason, and human minds unclouded with God and the Devil.

We have outlived the witch idea, but God and the Devil belong to the same family of fakes. The Devil is awfully sick; he is no longer susceptible to absent treatment, but God, the falsest fake of all fakes, still survives. The salaries and annuities of 100,000 preachers are too important from a business standpoint to allow the God fake to perish. These 100,000 men who like to be called divines are now (January 25th, 1911) assembled in Washington, D. C., to diagnose this thing, which exists everywhere and yet nowhere.

This assemblage of professional soul-savers claim that they represent 16,000,000 communicants in various parts of the United States; to these it is very essential that God be not allowed to follow Satan and the witches into innocuous desuetude; and with this same purpose in view the Kansas Legislature through the influence of a "patella statesman" is now considering the passage of a bill to prohibit baseball games on Sunday. According to Christian Scientists and other palliators, God exists in a ball game. So it seems there is so much of him in places of amusement that the churches do not get enough of his benign presence. This big assemblage of ministers at Washington probably contemplate some kind of concentration by which he will be a little more ubiquitous; no doubt their professions are so much in jeopardy that a little legislation would be more effectual than prayer.

The Salvation Army mix their prayers so much with tambourine racket and vagrancy, that God does not have a fair show to keep himself attenuated enough to serve the places in juxtapo-

sition. Any God needs help from some source, and he seems to be more in need of it on Sunday than on any other day.

The Sabbath, according to Webster, is a day of rest; and by modern usage it has also become a day of recreation and pleasure, and is better known as Sunday. It would seem from this that God, being very old, should be exempt from attending to the soul business on Sunday, especially when the people pay 100,000 clerks very fair wages, considering that they do business in the churches only one day each week, and so few attend.

There is a bill before the Legislature now to prohibit the game of baseball on Sunday; this is only a fatal struggle to get the God-idea supported by civil law. In the daily papers we notice how vainly some of the preachers try to exhort in favor of this because their jobs in the God-business of saving souls is on the decline. The bill not only tries to prevent the game of baseball, but it would prevent every kind of amusement on Sunday, so that the churches could have a better attendance. About the only reason educated young men attend the churches is to be in the company with young women, and hear the music. They care nothing for the prayers and the sermons. There is no better idea of "nothing much to think about" than a Sunday sermon, unless it contains something modern, or on a social, scientific, or political subject. The Bible is so contradictory and so full of absurdities that it no longer gets serious consideration by the more enlightened class of thinkers. All works of nature move along the same on Sunday as any other day of the week; and this proves that this passage "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" was invented by some old priest or preacher who saw a chance to give the soul-saving business of God, Holy Ghost & Co. a permanent hold on the credulous ignorant people; but that dark day of ignorance and superstition has passed. Truth will prevail in spite of organized God forces; and the sooner we get the word God out of every book of civil government and get such words

as truth, justice, goodness, and the laws of nature to take the various places which the word God now occupies, the better and more peaceable we will be. There is nothing much more disgusting to an advanced thinker than a chaplain's prayer in a legislative assemblage.

The Topeka *Daily Capital* reports a sermon delivered in the Novelty Theatre, Sunday, January 29, 1911, in which the eminent (?) divine asserts that all men believe in the Bible and Jesus Christ. Now he either told a willful lie, or else he is too ignorant to know the truth; and one is about as excusable as the other, especially in a man who assumes to instruct the people on morals.

The preachers who preach in theaters on Sunday have a much better chance of getting an audience than those who preach in the churches. Out of curiosity people go to hear a preacher in a theater, but if the preachers get to telling such monstrous "whoppers" it will not be long till they, the people, will go off to the Sunday baseball game or to the parks, to enjoy their Sunday recreation. Using Sunday as a day of recreation is a nice, sensible custom, but to try to make it compulsory, in order to make people go to church, is a kind of tyranny that tolerant citizens will not sanction. As for desecrating the Sabbath, even from a Christian standpoint, telling a falsehood seems about as complete a way as is known. This falsifying should desecrate any day of the week. By mistake, however, the entire sentence was not quoted: "Every man in this age believes in Jesus Christ and the Bible, and he should profess it before men. It is worth while to follow Jesus Christ, who is the greatest leader of the world today."

This is untrue from start to finish. The scientist is the greatest leader. He establishes the governments and equips them. The civil laws made and propounded by the economic thinker lead the governments of the world. Christ and the Bible do not lead or move anything. The only propelling power to operate Christ and the Bible with, is prayers, and it won't move a moun-

tain, a steamship, a railroad company, or anything. It won't even move a wheelbarrow. There is nothing so futile as prayer; and those who indulge in it belittle themselves in the estimation of scientists and finally degrade themselves in their own estimation, believing themselves to be low and vile sinners. Only the foolish practice it.

Theatrical entertainment has almost superseded church entertainment. The moral lessons of our best dramas teach the young people the right course, and they teach it in such a way that it becomes more impressive than anything in the line of worship, in such a way that self-respect is increased instead of diminished.

Comedies appeal to us as sentient beings. Church sermons appeal to us as low, vile sinners, incapable of doing right only by confession and continual support of the church.

According to the creeds, no one can be free from sin, if he does not support a church. According to ethics, every one who lives an honest, conscientious life, and does not in any way interfere with the rights of his fellow-beings, is free from sin. Sin is a misnomer.

Confession is the foundation of church support; you cannot do entirely right, unless you remunerate the church or the preacher for doing wrong; this is the creed-bound doctrine. But according to ethics when you do wrong you must change your course and make amends to society or yourself to get right again. A man who lives right according to ethics, has no use for a God; he looks to nature for a guide.

Since Miss Vintage returned from Topeka, she has treated me shamefully. She snubs me in public, refuses to ride with me. She returned my books with "Thank you; I do not intend to read such trash;" and lately she sent a note in which she says: "I would rather have nothing more to do with you, and hereby dismiss you; and hope you will soon see the evil toward which you are tending." While this seems bad, there is yet something

worse; she has become attached to a young preacher; we'll call him Joseph, because he seems to be a Joseph kind of a man, and lately he left the country between two days, and left several bills unpaid; and it is so rumored that Jesus Christ will have some half-brothers, or maybe sisters in this neighborhood. Now this will grieve you and perhaps disgrace you in the eyes of some, but it never shall in my estimation. We are all creatures of circumstances; and if influences and teachings over which we have no control lead any of us into doing anything indiscreet, things for which we are condemned by society, it remains our duty to live so nobly that we shall overbalance our mistakes in the opinions of our associates. Good sense is worth more to a woman than any kind of religion. A woman's morals, and her usefulness, too, depend more on her good sense than on her religion. By tracing crime to its source we may learn how to combat it. What would be thought of a man, supposing he could manage the phenomena of rain, who would cause it to rain forty days and nights and drown all the people on the face of the earth?

There is nothing in the history of crime equal to this, yet some people pretend to believe this, and worship the being whom they suppose did it.

There is little chance for the suppression of crime as long as people worship criminals.

A divine dispensation of providence like the Christians say Noah's flood was, is enough to stupefy the morality of all those who try to believe it. It is no wonder that we do not advance to a condition of universal peace and plenty while we continue to believe in a spiritual being who would set such an example. The innate good in man with the aid given by science has enabled him to build the present civilization, and the bigoted Christian tries to make it appear that Christianity did it. It was done in spite of christianity, and not because of it.

The most discouraging things we have to deal with now, in

order to keep civilization from going back to a condition of the Dark Ages, is christianity and spiritualism. These superstitious mysticisms haunt the mind of the child before he gains his reason, because he is taught to believe in such things every time he goes where prayers are delivered.

The most progressive men of the last century were Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Abe Lincoln, Darwin, Huxley, Haeckel, and Edison. Such as these (and there are thousands of others, just as sensible, though not so prominent) we may thank for the happiness and freedom we now enjoy.

Until every man acts upon his own resources as these men did, and not depend on preachers and priests, our condition, socially politically and economically, will not advance.

DASH BLANK.

## XIV.

### THE OLD MAID'S RELIGION BECOMES ELASTIC.

JANUARY 15, 1911.

MR. BLANK: We are nearing each other in our conclusions. Reading the same papers and the same books has a wonderful influence in harmonizing the differences which estrange individuals. I notice such an improvement in your correspondence since you dropped the pronoun I. The Legislature is now grilling and grumbling and grading. Everything from patellas to pates is under the surveillance of the loquacious legislator. He is egregious in his egoism, and gracious in his credulity.

His approbations are ready for most any kind of appropriations; in fact, he is an expert on appropriations as well as a tough proposition. It must not be inferred that he is ignorant, neither must it be inferred that he is wise; for he is multiform. On the 20th inst. he had a chance to do his sister and mother a favor by adopting the next meeting to consider the suffrage legislation, and dispose of this much-needed and much-neglected cause; but he felt so important over his party platform duties, he discovered a ruse by which he could act upon this proposition in connection with something else which would require an amendment to defeat the woman's cause.

If he paid less attention to patellas, and parliamentary flippancy, and more attention to common decency and common sense, there would be a better chance for him to earn his beggarly three dollars per day.

He has about three attendants at two dollars per day, so he costs the State about nine dollars per day, and there are so many of his highness that about fifteen hundred dollars per day is the

modest little sum he considers himself worth. Some may have erroneous ideas of how he can make use of so many attendants (servants). It must be remembered that his requirements are various, for he is no ordinary individual. In addition to sending to the State Library for reference books, his spittoon and cigar accomplishments are complexly complicated, and require much attention; and the waste-basket by his desk must be attended to every few minutes, for his correspondence and solicitations from his constituency must not be neglected. Then again, because of the great mental strain his cutaneous welfare is very important, and the cuticle must not be allowed to expand from uneven temperatures, and to adjust things satisfactorily he needs ventilation experts, two to each man,—one to keep the temperature high enough and another to keep it low enough. He should have a medical expert, too, to examine his pulse after each thrilling oration.

The voter can never understand what a sacrifice the legislator makes in serving his constituents. The legislator is outdone in his generosity only by one modern philanthropist—the Good Fellow. Take either of them individually and there are some very good specimens of manhood—honorable, conscientious, intellectual, and willing as well as anxious to do good; but it seems these kinds are in the minority.

The Good Fellow is more anxious to make liberal gifts at Christmas-time than he is to remove the cause which makes the poor and miserable so dependent upon his gifts; and he takes more pride in his generosity than he takes interest in the conditions which make poverty tributary to affluence. He thinks display advertisements and selling goods at 50 per cent. profit, both of which the ignorant consumer is inveigled to pay for, are creditable business opportunities. These opportunities make him rich, and the laboring consumer poor; but he makes the poor fellows' children happy on Christmas, one day out of three hundred and

sixty-five. The three hundred and sixty-four days he uses in exploiting the poor by collecting interest, profits, and rents, in order to be real generous one day in each year.

He also delights in using his surplus to buy real estate, and erect houses thereon, and sell them on the installment plan to the laborer, making 50 per cent. on the transaction; and at Christmastide there is so much installment money to be raised that the laboring consumer is again humiliated by a gift, amounting possibly to one-fourth of one per cent. of the trifling profit of 50 per cent. on the installment deal.

This Good Fellow has many schemes to build up the industries of his city. Various kinds of bonds must be issued to do public works, for he has much money ready for investment. He can purchase these bonds and get an annual income of 6 per cent on the cost of every public improvement; he is a financier.

A financier is one who can manipulate the building of a city in such a way that he can keep the manual laborers all poor, and himself rich. He is seldom a legislator; he is most always a lobbyist. He is the indirect cause of all the poorly clothed and poorly fed children with whom he is so generous one day in each year.

He is an optimist, and frowns on anyone who is not cheerful and contented, and Mr. Blank, he is not always a church member, either, but he is most always a shrewd politician. It is to his interest to get the city in debt to him, for he hopes to retire as soon as he can get everything in sight covered with mortgages and bonds which are a thousand times more productive and less trouble than chattel slaves, and they never die; they mature. But if the mass of the people are kept poor enough, it only takes a few strokes of the pen to get them refunded.

The legislator and the Good Fellow are against this sentiment of progression: "The war to wrest from monopoly the resources that belong to all the people, will never stop."—Gifford Pinchot.

The legislators and the Good Fellows up to date, Jan. 25, 1911, are trying to prevent any such war from starting. They would rather palliate the hardships of the poor laborers with Christmas presents.

We need progressive progression which will not make it necessary for the provider of a family to die before a home is provided for his children,—a home which actually belongs to the family bought with life-insurance money. Of all the monstrous crimes upon the business credulity of business men, life insurance is the greatest. It would be useless to deny that there are cases which indicate that families are benefitted by money from a father's, mother's, or wife's life insurance; notwithstanding, the basic principle with all its crime-producing tendencies, is german to a cankerous growth on the morality and permanent welfare of the people.

Let us consider a life-insurance company and all its patrons as a community, entirely away from the rest of humanity on a large island, with all modern equipments of civilization. On this life-insured island we will consider all the industries in a prosperous condition, but subject to the usual drawbacks, with which the best State in our Union has to contend. To get at the evil we must allow that every child as well as every adult has its life insured, and policies all paid promptly. For the illustration to be easily understood, we will reckon the policies at \$1000 each; (the reckoning of course would be the same in actuality whether the policies were \$1000 or \$10,000.) Now all these persons have got to die sometime; so one thousand dollars will have to be paid after the death of every patron. Now the expenses of conducting this insurance business: Salaries of the officials, commission of solicitors, clerks, office buildings, furniture stationery,—we are making the estimate supposing that there will be no lawyers and lawsuits, all of which cost an enormous amount of money. The sources of income for the company come entirely from the patrons. Now can any sane person believe that the company can pay back more than

is paid in, and defray all expenses connected with the business? You see it is a losing proposition if everybody keeps his payments made according to his policy agreements, and it is only because some fail and cannot make their payments and their policies become annulled. So it is plain that whatever money there is to pay losses, comes by the misfortune of the poor fellows who lost their money. Thus it is that we hear so much about the wonderful beneficiary organizations, modern brotherhoods, all the profits of which come from the hardships of those who lost.

It is demoralizing to society to uphold an institution which pays money to some of its patrons, by the loss of other patrons. "But stop! Look here, you female fiend: you are not giving us a fair deal. You ought to be jailed for misrepresenting us! Let a life-insurance man explain how we do these legerdemain feats of finance.

"It's like this: money has a productive capacity of 6 per cent per annum by law. Granted legal by State enactment, and a good deal more where we can work in a commission from the borrower. You see we men who live in the cities, who take daily baths, and smoke fine 10c. cigars, and go to theaters, and ride in automobiles, have our perceptions quickened, so that we get into the intricacies of finance; and we can make investments whereby a dollar doubles itself in a very few years. Of course some of the farmers and laborers lose on their policy requirements, but those would not know how to make skillful investments and would lose their money anyhow if they should start a business of their own; so we might as well have their savings as somebody else, for we can pay it to the widows and children of those of us who do keep up our payments.

"But it is our skill in making money repeat itself which enables us to keep the funds of our company replenished. The ordinary policy-holder has no business ability; he does not know how to take advantage of his fellow-man in a legal way, and besides he

often has scruples which interfere with his peace of mind ; so he prefers to delegate this skillful investment process to us (a company which is not bothered with compunctions). We have trained men to do this scrubby work. True, we do not produce anything to eat or wear, or things that in any way contribute to the material or mental welfare of mankind, all of which could be sold to raise money ; but we get the money all the same."

Yes, they get the money, and a minority of the policy-holders get some benefit, and the majority get left,—or "get robbed" would be more appropriate—legally, of course.

Now and then a policy-holder kills a wife, a husband, a daughter, a son, a father, or mother, because their death would relieve their circumstances ; and occasionally a man or woman commits suicide because they believe they would be worth more dead than alive. True, some companies provide against this, and keep the amount of the policy.

These life-insurance companies are good things for the men who run them, and they make it appear very decent to maintain them, but they are entirely bad ; there is not a good feature about them. They produce nothing but corruption ; they take from the unfortunate and give to the fortunate ; they maintain a lot of browbeating solicitors ; they encourage murders, homicides, and suicides ; they are a disgrace to our social system, and should be driven from our State.

If our State officials are as wise as they ought to be, and are really in earnest about protecting the citizens of Kansas from the blackest, most corrupting, debasing frauds of these times, they will drive every life-insurance company from the State, after attaching their funds and applying them *pro rata* to the policy-holders. Just a little radical regulation is needed.

The monthly and weekly publications purporting to be in the interest of policy-holders contain the names of all those who have been beneficiaries, but there is little or nothing said about

those who have kept up payments for years, and then, after some misfortune has overtaken them, have to lose all their savings with which the beneficiaries are paid.

Since we have a postal savings bank, which makes your deposits absolutely safe, would it not be more humane and a good deal safer to deposit your money and manage the investment, even at the low rate of interest allowed, than to become a member of some endowment company, and run the risk of losing it all; besides not being a party to the iniquitous support of a life insurance company? A question like this, many will say, is not worthy of a serious consideration, so far as reflecting on the good of an insurance is concerned. Nevertheless, a great many who take out policies lose all they have saved for years, and the more there are who lose, the more profitable it is to the officers of the company; for then they can show better annual statements and demand larger salaries. Their great business capacity is based on the hardships, losses, and general wrecks of those who are unfortunate.

Shame on an institution whose prosperity is based on the ruin of hard-working, industrious people! How can those who have matured policies enjoy the money taken from those who cannot keep up their payments? The office-holders and solicitors would be benefitted, and all the rest would lose just to the extent that these officials would win, for the company produces nothing of material worth to mankind.

They are a burden on society, and just as vicious as the lotteries which were suppressed a few years ago. They have been advertised in the most glowing language as beneficial to those who lost a husband or wife; but they keep no account, nor do they tell how many husbands and wives and orphan children have suffered losses which made the gains for those who were benefitted.

Poor, stupid, depressed, ignorant people, how shamefully you have let these knaves impose upon you! Better, far better, it

would be to place your money in a postal savings bank and get a low rate of interest on it than turn it over at such great risks to these knaves. You and your children could then get it back when you needed it, and you would not be tempted to take each other's lives for the sake of gain; so it is evident if we have a progressive progression, we will soon be driving these demoralizing knaves, life-insurance agents, from our State.

Denouncing the Bible and the Christian religion in general, as you are doing publicly and privately, only creates animosity, and keeps the people divided on questions of great importance; so let each religion take care of itself; there is no necessity for legislation one way or the other. Every time a dogmatist tries to force a bill through a legislative assembly for the purpose of giving favor to a special religion, all other religions are endangered if they differ essentially.

Being good according to ethics might do in a community where ethics were understood. Regulations and rules, however, which the civil laws aim to maintain, have given us a foundation for better development than was known in past ages, but if the various religions have a good moral effect on the communicants, even though they do hinder enlightenment as you claim, by all means let them alone. All history shows that to attack a religion makes trouble.

The most interesting lecture which I have had the pleasure of attending since I came to Topeka, was delivered at 418 Kansas avenue, Sunday, January 29, 1911. The most impressive part about this lecture was, the investigation the lecturer had made of a shoe factory in St. Louis. He said this factory was so complete in management, machinery and equipment, that it turned out a finished product of twelve pairs of shoes for each person connected with its operation every day. He did not give the number of persons it took to operate the factory; but he said four pairs from each of the twelve pairs of shoes paid for the operating expenses,

including all wages, raw material, 6 per cent. interest on plant, taxes, heat, light, insurance, and everything whatsoever connected with the expense of management.

He said that eight pairs from each of the twelve pairs went to the stockholder of the plant, none of whom had anything to do with the management of the plant. To make it plainer, he said each worker's labor yielded eight pairs of shoes for a clear profit every day of the year.

This does not seem possible. Most industries do well if they yield a 6 per cent. interest on the capital invested, and the idea of getting two-thirds of the finished product besides the usual 6 per cent seems too outrageously unjust to believe; so I have concluded that there was an awful exaggeration, or an awful mistake. He seemed earnest and honest in all his delineations. He afterward told how all these workers had to scrimp and save, in order to get enough to eat and wear, and no wonder if his statements were true. If any such condition exists in the manufacturing industries, the socialists are right in proclaiming that there should be no private or corporate ownerships. For earnestness and clearness I never heard a better lecture. Private and corporate ownership, properly regulated by law, seems more economical, and more apt to give the best incentive for action and close observation. The manager of the shoe factory, for instance, knowing that his job could not be retained except care and economy be practiced, would do his best; but any such profit should not be allowed. The law of the land should see that the workers get everything above 6 per cent interest on the physical valuation of the plant after expenses of operation, raw material, etc., are adjusted.

Socialism seeks to make the live, worthy people of so much use to society that society cannot afford to neglect them, especially in the interest of capital. Socialism does not believe in paying a bounty on the dead, as our present system does, inducing people to kill one another in order to bring some money into the family.

Under present conditions there may be some good in the mutual life-insurance companies; in which assessments are made to pay for the dead, but an unworthy, cruel, scheming, grafting member gets paid according to the dollars he can command.

This brotherly love is based on cash, and it is a reflection on our economic system that so many good people patronize it because they see no other way of making any provision for those they love.

The Good Fellows who sell patent medicines, prepared foods and other nostrums, need some attention. There are some products, widely advertised, which are worthy, but taken as a whole, there is a lot of graft and humbuggery to contend with. Some firms which manufacture prepared breakfast foods spend more in advertising them than they do for the grains out of which these products are made, and the consumers not only pay for this advertising, but in some cases pay a seventy-five per cent. profit besides to the manufacturer, and then twenty-five per cent. profit to the local dealer. Good sound corn usually costs one dollar per hundred pounds, and the products manufactured therefrom retail at five dollars per one hundred pounds. Whether or not these big firms are in a combine to regulate prices, does not matter; no doubt it is tacitly understood by capitalists everywhere that the people will be exploited by the right kind of advertising; and that the people are too heedless and foolish to consider their expenses enough to demand and enact laws to protect themselves.

It is just as essential that food products should be regulated by law as it is that freight rates should be regulated by law. All salaries for public services are regulated by law, and those of the salaried men who make laws wink at the manufacturers and talk the competition theory to the producers and consumers while they, the men with fixed incomes, from sheriff to president, manufacturers, rent collectors, bankers and potentates, point with pride to our splendid civilization.

These exploiters feel so generous that they organize themselves into Good Fellows every Christmas to make the poor children happy one day in the year. They enlist the aid of the daily papers to help the people to be cheerful, patriotic and hopeful; so the exploitation will continue to make poor and needy enough for another Merry Christmas. Round and round these plundering optimists operate, persuading themselves that it is because they are so energetic and bright that success meets them at every turn.

The sad part about this condition is, that these poor consumers and producers are so ignorant and reckless in their habits of life that they cannot be taught to see why and how they are imposed upon by competition among themselves and exploitation by those who manage the industries and make the laws. Quietly and serenely the nostrum-vendor gets in his noxious work on the credulous citizens, almost entirely by skillful advertising, and little or no attempt is ever made by law to hinder this kind of deception.

The prosperity of the daily newspapers is based on the advertising they can command, and thus the people are persuaded and coaxed into buying all kinds of useless things for which they have no use, and most all of which are sold on a fifty-per-cent-profit basis. This is the business which gives the Good Fellows an advantage over the unsuspecting consumers, and which enables them to be so generous at Christmas-time; but there is great enlightenment not far distant.

Here is something unusual in the first column of the *Topeka Daily Capital*, from Prof. Frank W. Blackmar, February 4th, 1911:

"Our American democracy depends for its future success upon the organizations of neighborhoods into social bodies for the prevention of crime. It is easy also to pass laws, but the crucial test of it all is when these laws are put into effect. The American

people have come to look upon officers of the law as their masters, and to leave all law enforcement to them. They should realize that the officers are the public servants, and every citizen has a particular interest in the way the affairs of State are run. However, so that the best good may come from a healthy interest by the voters in the affairs of the State, there should be organization. The best things are always secured by a united effort of good people. The secret of good government and the progress of modern life lies not in the curing of crime, but in the prevention of crime. Everyone should be interested in building up a social condition and environment that will be an influence toward the right and no producer of crime. In this, special care should be given to the training of children. Every good citizen should take an interest in the boys of his neighborhood, and especially so if any of them show signs of being wild and inclined toward crime. Many a child has gone to the bad because at the critical moment no friendly word or touch of the hand has been given him.

“Play is just as necessary to the growth and development of children, as is work to the grown person. The great fault with present ideas with regard to the training of children, is that the play idea is lost sight of in the desire that the child shall not lose sight of the work idea. A child reared without play is as abnormal as the man who has no work. The churches and Sunday schools have failed to use the greatest influence for good ever known, by which the lives of children can be controlled. All of them learn from our associations, and if the churches were to furnish means for amusement there would be no problem for handling the youth of our country.

“We are never created fully, until we are created socially. If the church and Sunday school were to look after the social, instead of the so-called spiritual needs of the growing voter, the

nation would be a great gainer, and likewise would be the church and the Sunday school.

"There is this to say in favor of the child-labor law: it places the government on the side of the best conditions for the growing citizens. In cases where poor parents cannot afford to send their children to school, the labor law works an injustice, and there should be some way by which these children should be given a pittance while they are in school; therefore organize with this end in view: A social playground and place of amusement where all may meet for the social good of the community."

To advance modern improvements and theories we must read less of the old times, and practice the knowledge associated with the telephone age. The books written in this age ought to be read more than those written in less progressive ages.

Dash, I am feeling lonesome. Nothing would please me better than for you to come to Topeka and stay two or three weeks. I feel the need of your association. Come if you can, while the Legislature is in session, and we will be in the gallery whenever anything important is being discussed.

We will attend all the theaters, picture shows, and churches. You need just such a change since you and Vina no longer get joy from the same source. I feel sorry for you, but I feel more sorry for Vina, if anything so disgraceful as you have hinted has happened. Come. Please come!

Always your friend,

LINA.

#### XIV.

#### IN THE DOME OF THE CAPITOL.

LINA—How do you feel?

DASH—Exalted. How do you feel?

LINA—Exhausted. Climbing those winding stairs, in so short a time, reminds me that there is a limit to my strength. How I wish we might rest long enough to admire this beautiful city and then be able to go on up to where the air is so light that it would barely sustain our lives, and still be as safe as we are in the dome of this building! I desire so much to do something unusual to-day; would like to aeronaut from here to another planet; would like to go where there is no strife and sorrow, no pain and trouble; where joy and gentleness would be the heritage of everything that breathes and moves.

DASH—I think you are doing something unusual while you are so much desiring to aeronaut; but you would get lonesome without an Arius to hold your hand as you so willingly consent to my doing. It has been only a few months since you were very much disturbed when I attempted to take your hand.

LINA—Let it go, please, for the present; the unusual, I find, must not come too sudden. Let anticipation explore and prepare me for the unexpected.

DASH—Unexpected! Did you really suppose that I would leave my business and spend a couple of weeks with you and treat you as an ancient maiden lady? Talk nothing but books, prohibition, equal suffrage, sociology and such? If you did you surely prepared for the unusual.

LINA—Look over to the west; those splendid buildings are where the feeble-minded are confined. That fine building on the

corner to the northeast, is where the Capper publications are handled, and around here to the east are the Santa Fe offices; over to the east in the distance the shops are located; there on the southeast corner, is the State Printing Plant; away to the southwest is the Washburn College. This large brownstone building, on the northeast corner of the square, is the City Library. Those two large brick buildings northwest of the square, on either side of the street, are the High School and Manual Training School. Now behold the fine city. Public schools and churches in every direction, and the splendid residences, business houses, manufacturing plants, hotels, hospitals, power plants. Off in the distance look at the superb agricultural communities. What a soul-stirring panorama! How delightful! All this I have enjoyed alone several times, but methinks it is more entrancing today than ever before.

DASH—Yes, the scene is rather nice; nevertheless there is a being near me, more interesting to me than everything else in view.

LINA—Ah, Dash, you could make me happier than I can tell, and you could also make me so miserable that I would be tempted to leap head first from this high place to the iron structure below, ending my life, but for the belief that such a rash act would retard my development in eternity.

DASH—It confuses me some to know that you are not more self-poised than to think of anything so awful. Let us not entertain anything so unworthy of such a high place as this; you are more impressed with the works of man than you are with the works of Nature. Nature has so many works which the ingenuity of man cannot counterfeit. Nature speaks in unmistakable terms to all mankind, in a language which does not need interpretation. Hence the uselessness of all these churches. They have their origin in an ignorant age, and are used today as a money-making scheme for idlers. In the immensity of the universe we see

Nature's handiwork, and through Nature's laws we are educated more in morality than the churches can teach us.

LINA—Oh, please, Dash, let us not get into an argument; you are opening up a subject which human beings will likely always be quarreling about; you are not saying the things that I want to hear today. There are subjects more interesting to us than religion.

DASH—All right! So be it! I would rather go right into that Edison power plant and have some good electrician explain its wonderful operation than to hear the best theologian that ever lived. The school buildings excite my admiration; and whatever veneration I have goes toward those printing plants, libraries, business houses, this State building and all the State and private institutions which are useful to the people. Yes, it is very enjoyable to behold this scene.

LINA—This evening at 7 : 30 the legislators are going to discuss the Suffrage bill to amend our Constitution, and I know we will enjoy it. A more beautiful day than this in February, we seldom have; so pleasant, is it not?

DASH—I do not see how the day could be any nicer. The perspective of this scene does not show the theatre buildings, does it?

LINA—Sure. There is the Grand, right down north, on the west side of Jackson. The Majestic and the Novelty are over there east of Kansas avenue, on the north side of Eighth. All these we will visit before you go back. Next Sunday we will go to the social lecture between here and the bridge on the east side of Kansas avenue. There are things much more interesting to see and hear than anything we have in view up here. I have taken more interest in the State-house on account of the legislature being in session. There are so many laws which would be beneficial to society, and which would be enacted were it not for party

politics; jealousy in politics seems almost as prevelant as in social circles.

DASH—You will most likely get into the Socialist movement and mount the rostrum with Warren and Debs when you get tired of Topeka.

LINA—There is no likelihood of that. But the progressives will have to appropriate some of their thunder (Warren's and Debs's) to carry the next campaign in Kansas. There is a general breaking-up of party lines. People are beginning to think that workers should get all they earn, and that office-holders and capitalists should get only what they earn. As a matter of fact, salaries of county, State and national officials are all out of proportion with legitimate industrial incomes. When the salary of the President of the United States was raised from \$50,000 to \$100,000, that was a hard blow on a democratic form of government. The flimsy excuse for doing this was that able men in the ordinary vocations were getting more than this, and that the ablest men in the country could not be procured unless the salaries were all increased. The men who were getting more were not doing it by fair means. It was only done by modern, legal rascality, taking more than they earned. The presidents of insurance companies and railroad companies were pointed out as the ablest, and for applying schemes to take advantage of consumers and producers they certainly were able. Surely, no just man will claim that Carnegie and Rockefeller earn all they get, and that the men who dig the mineral and pipe the oil from the earth get all they earn. When men get in power, they care little about the struggles laborers are having. There are no offices in the country that could not be filled by thousands of men just as capable as those who now occupy them, and there never has been a scarcity of good men offering themselves. Things cannot continue many years as they are now. Industrial adjustments on new lines of justice will

spring from the intelligence generated by freedom of speech and press.

DASH—So you are taking a cheerful view of it, but you are mistaken just the same in believing that a better condition for those who labor is near at hand. History has not made any such a record. And it would be against Nature's law to do anything of the kind. Population would become so dense that we would be starving as they are in China. The older a country gets the higher the salaries are, and the cheaper the wages. It is so easy to keep wages low when the laborers are ignorant; and unless the churches quit teaching the ignorant to worship God, there will be no change; and civilization will fall back to where it started from. If modern ethics and metaphysics had the money which is wasted in the God business, to help the ignorant out of their thralldom, some such a condition as you imagine might prevail. The churches serve these two evil purposes: The rich believe it is by divine providence that they are the masters, and may live by the efforts of the poor; and the poor believe it is by the will of God that they are slaves, instead of masters; while the preachers with pious pomp repeat, "Blessed are the meek and lowly, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven," etc. So, my dear old girl, you had just as well dismiss economics and get a copy of "In His Steps," or some other fool piece of fiction; marry a preacher and raise a family. Did you notice, what Capper, MacLennan, and Sheldon, in brotherly conclave, it seems, at one of the churches last night, had to say about the newspapers?

LINA—I did not read it; I noticed the headlines. I was so interested to have you with me that I was not absorbed in local affairs.

DASH—That man Capper is smooth, and Sheldon is narrow, intolerant, and 100 years behind the times so far as his ideas of progression are concerned. I judge you are somewhat in sympathy with Mr. Sheldon in his estimation of newspapers. He

deplores the indecency of the newspapers, yet the worst newspapers we have do not use as indecent language as the Bible contains. Mr. MacLennan referred Mr. Sheldon to this, and he and Capper too, palliated this fact all they could. But no doubt the divine doer who does the rich people on a dollar basis, and the poor on a 25-cent basis, thinks he is not getting a fair deal through the newspapers. If you can advance yourself to that point of reality in which newspapers prove their superiority from a moral point of view, then indeed you will be a reformer.

LINA—Let us go down to the museum on the top floor of the main building and see the many interesting things. I do not want to talk religion; you will get so sarcastic and disrespectful. Awhile ago you referred to church work as "God business." I know the keen lash of your sarcasm and ridicule too well to encourage it.

DASH—Pshaw! I'm not talking religion—just getting a few facts off my mind so I can talk love. There is also a report in the *Daily Capital*, telling how the itinerant gospel dealer at the Auditorium moves his wares out to anxious sinners. He tells Christians how they "follow Christ afar off." Of course he deals in the same kind of rant that the other dealers do. He works on the 25-cent per capita basis, and cultivates the good graces of the brethren to save board.

LINA—Are you about done?

DASH—Yes, but the attack you made on advertising needs a review, and you can do no better than to read Mr. Capper's reply to Sheldon. This reply is logical and liberal, thorough and comprehensive. It fairly glitters with bright conclusions. Mr. Capper is the best material for the next Governor, and Mr. MacLennan is a close second, judging from their progressive comments in that conclave. You remember a few years ago Mr. Capper allowed Mr. Sheldon to edit the *Daily* according to Christ & Co. Mr. MacLennan tells what a slump there was in the sub-

scription list after he (Sheldon) quit the job, and he and Capper were so courteous that they never reminded Sheldon that it was out of curiosity and the novelty of the scheme that the public for one week gave the paper a large circulation. Everyone knows that if Sheldon had edited the Daily a year, instead of a week, he would have killed it too dead to skin.

LINA—What an expression! Where did you get it? Why do you use it?

DASH—Oh, it is just a habit. The Rubes out in western Kansas use it when a thing is so dead that it is not approachable—so dead that it cannot be utilized for any purpose whatever, not even for soap-grease.

LINA—I hope you feel better since you have got rid of some of your sarcasm. However, Mr. Sheldon is regarded as one of the best citizens in Topeka.

DASH—I am not saying anything against him as a citizen; it is with his capacity as a teacher of morals that I have to do. This thing they call christianity, which is so badly overestimated, has no monopoly on morality. A man can be just as good without it as he can with it. Society needs a morality independent of Christian morals.

LINA—Now you are endeavoring to draw me into an argument, by introducing ways and means to establish better morals. You know something about liquor and tobacco, the two worst evils of this age. Tell the world the evils of intoxicating liquor and tobacco. Give your experience. How did you ever manage to quit them?

DASH—Nature taught me in the plainest way possible. It is like this: Poison, in small doses, has a pleasant sensation for the nerves, the kind of stupor that it first creates, when a boy first uses it, is pleasant, though nauseating if he gets the least bit too much. Tobacco contains enough poison to make it enticingly dangerous. Nature created mankind so that anything which

is a little dangerous is very interesting. At the age when a boy has never been contaminated with evil, a very small particle of tobacco placed in the mouth will give him those sensations, and if he should swallow this small particle he would become deathly sick. Very seldom it is that a boy swallows tobacco-juice the second time. He finds he has to increase the doses to get the proper sensation. The habit soon becomes established, and the filthy tranquil feeling gradually becomes less, but the craving to have it still remains. A boy enjoys doing what a man does, and when he finds he can use a whole lot of tobacco and spit straight, he is right well satisfied with himself; his nerves become weak, and his digestion impaired, if he is just an ordinary boy. With extraordinary boys, I would rather not try to analyze influences and consequences. No doubt all who use it are more or less abnormal, and if they can be made to realize this, they will generally quit it through self-respect.

LINA—Well, you have made quite a little speech, but you have told more about how to commence using it than you have told how to quit.

DASH—The way to quit anything is to quit it. A better thing is never to commence it. I find by experience that my mind is clearer and more active and my health better since I quit it.

LINA—Would you favor legislation that would prohibit the manufacturing of it?

DASH—Yes, I would. It is not essential to a man's welfare. It is a poisonous drug, and the bad influence it has on manhood is almost beyond estimation, and I believe that woman suffrage is the only power that will exterminate it.

LINA—You believe, then, it is possible to legislate mankind into being good?

DASH—No; but I do believe it is possible to legislate so as to hinder him from being quite so bad, by discouraging the manufacture and sale of tobacco, the same as intoxicating liquors.

LINA—Could you outline a code of morals that would serve in the place which Christians claim as theirs originally?

DASH—Easily. Be good. This is not going to be a Sermon on the Mount, but a declaration of morals from the top of Topeka Capitol. Be good, not in the name of the son of anybody, but for the sake of mankind and the preservation of this civilization. Be good, because it is the way to be happy. Be good by being sociable, honest and industrious, cheerful, hopeful, and generous. Be good by not trying to interfere with innocent sports and pastimes on Sunday with a view to making people attend church. Be good by helping those in trouble, and speaking kindly, and reproving those who do wrong through ignorance. Be good by supporting the good civil laws of our country. Be good by being careful not to violate the rights of others in the pursuit of your own happiness. Be good by honoring and respecting everyone who is worthy, and by denouncing evil in all its forms. Discourage the use of tobacco and intoxicating liquors by helping to prohibit the manufacture and sale by law enactment. Be good whenever you can, wherever you can, and in as many ways as you can. Be good by being sensible enough to quit praying to an imaginary God. Be your own motor, and trust yourself in matters of fine discernment. Be good by trying to develop yourself to pursue some honorable vocation. Be good by shunning an idle, indolent life. Be good by supporting and encouraging public schools and all other public institutions which contribute to the welfare of mankind. Be good by obeying nature's law, and you will be as happy as it is possible for human beings to be.

LINA—Well, a person would have to be better than most people are to be all your sermonette recommends. I suppose you call it modern inspiration.

DASH—It's a whole lot better to live by than what the preachers call Divine inspiration. The unwritten laws of nature, coming through man's experience, have inspired the Capitol "sermonette."

But I would rather not have the name "sermonette" attached. Capitol morals, from man's experience with nature's laws, put into words, are inspirations that do not need a lot of flunkeys to explain them.

LINA—"Flunkeys"! There you go again. Is that your idea of being generous?

DASH—That is my idea of being honest, and calling things by their right names. Fine discriminations are worthy of every-day practice.

LINA—When there are so many evils more evident than those which in your perverted mind appear to be the greatest, and which in the majority of minds are not considered evils, it is strange that you do not denounce economic evils which produce the wretchedly poor, and the heartless rich.

DASH—I see: you would have me lead out on "Progress and Poverty," or "Progressive Progression" as seen through the smoky goggles of a Socialist. Your ideas of a new industrialism which you have analyzed at length in your letters are not applicable to the present state of society, in which some are industrious and ambitious and others are lazy and indolent, thoughtless, intemperate, and extravagant. I predict when Old Ed Howe's new magazine gets in its work you Socialists will get some new light. The economic conditions which prevail at present are not utilized by the poorer class of people; that is the reason that they have hardships and poverty. Your scathing briefs on the good fellows in general, are poorly taken. If the enterprising men did not go ahead and build up the cities, the shiftless poor would not have any houses to live in; they are so thoughtless and dissipated, and so steeped with religious mysticism.—Don't cry, my dear friend; I did not mean to hurt your feelings. Come, let us go down into the museum.

LINA—Oh, Dash, why, oh, why will you be so blind? I have come to love you as no other living person. I thought when your

personal habits were improved, you would be more generous in looking at the civic conditions which make the poor and the wretched, but you seem hard-hearted. You have an awful advantage of me now, because I have allowed myself to love you.— You never saw me cry like this. I am sorry I lost control of myself.

DASH—Excuse me, my dear friend; let me hold your hand. We will quit the Capitol dome, and we will be more congenial. I did not come here to make you miserable like this. I did not suspect you were so emotional. Let your grief pass; allow me to look into your pretty eyes. There are other sight-seers coming up inside the dome. We can come up here another day before I go back to western Kansas. Tomorrow evening in your room, we will enjoy a privacy where your emotions cannot disturb any other than myself.

## XV.

### IN LINA'S ROOM IN TOPEKA.

LINA—I am glad you came so early; we can visit two hours before the Suffrage meeting at the State-house. I have been quite well contented in this room most of the time this winter, but I am getting tired of this kind of life. To live in a city where nearly all are entire strangers is very interesting for a while, and the while would be of lifetime duration if the means of living were abundant. It is only because I have to practice a disagreeable economy to keep myself that my time gets irksome. If a person has money as well as intelligence, and respectability, the chances for enjoyment are greatly enhanced.

DASH—Do you mean to intimate that money can take the place of your best friends, in the enjoyment of life?

LINA—No, not that; but “best friends” can be made so numerous that one is less liable to get lonesome, attachments can become so strong that dollars cannot measure the strength, so strong that one’s own life is incomplete without the chance to enjoy that attachment.

DASH—So you have somewhat abandoned the idea that books and literature can take the place of human beings?

LINA—I do not remember that I ever had that idea. There are times when silence, books and papers do entertain to entire satisfaction; but those times are mere interims between real, energetic association in which we hear the voice, see the eye, and touch the person of a fellow-being. We are products of nature, and must have those who are like us to get anything like complete enjoyment.

DASH—God, alone, is rather poor company, is he not?

LINA—I must confess, Dash, that I do not know anything about God, except what I have read in books and heard in church. Let us not talk religion any more this evening.

DASH—I'll agree to that if you will agree to let economics alone.

LINA—Good! That is fair; I am as tired of political economy as I am of religion as a subject of entertainment, except there be a big audience. Between you and I, I fear there will always be a disagreement on these subjects. Tell me something about your social adventures since I left.

DASH—You already know about the most serious adventure I have had, for I believe Vina has told you fully as much as I have told you.

LINA—Your social adventures I hope were not all confined to Vina. Surely not. There are so many marriageable young women out there.

DASH—I have found it more harmonious not to relate very much about my experience with women. Even to a confidential friend, it is desperately unsafe.

LINA—I received a letter from Vina last night. She is heart-broken, and contemplates coming here to live.

DASH—I would rather see that letter than anything else she has ever written. I have been bothered some about her, but I did intend that she should never know it. I never treated her in any other way than I have treated you. I may have been blunt, and seemingly ungenteel, but I never intended to be disrespectful. Since she rejected me I have said nothing to anybody, except you, about the matter. I regret that I have not demanded my letters and the presents which I gave. She should send them and a formal rejection in her own handwriting. I foolishly destroyed a note she wrote me, in which a formal rejection was plain enough to go as evidence in defense of a breach of promise suit. She has a letter, I am afraid, that I wrote while in Denver. If I could

know that this letter was destroyed, I would feel easier. Some of the breach of promise suits which were given in detail in the *Topeka Daily Capital* ought to be a warning to a man. I would like to know how Vina feels about the matter.

LINA—I can tell you about how she feels, and you will be surprised more than you have been lately, but I could not show you her letter without doing her an injustice as well as myself.—Courtships sometimes take queer turns, and become very hazardous. The most humiliating sight I ever knew was a breach of promise suit here in Topeka. All those who attended this suit certainly ought to have learned a lesson. Dishonor in love affairs has been the source of more tragedies than anything else; it has also caused more blighted lives than tongue or pen can ever tell. In many cases jealousy precedes the most serious troubles we have; and right here, I am going to make a confession which many women would not make: I am jealous of my niece. The evils which we inherit are hard to combat, but I vow and declare that this jealousy shall not cause anybody but myself, any trouble or grief. If you love Vina more than me, I'll help you to repair your broken engagement.

DASH—I do not want to commit myself in any way whatever, but I would like to know how she feels since she has had a new experience and ample time to reconsider what she has done. Anything she may have said will not surprise me more than your confession. The confession, not the jealousy, is what surprised me most. It is not often a woman will admit such a thing as being jealous, which seems more prevalent among them than among men.

LINA—My view is opposite on your last statement. I wish you could have seen the play of *The Country Town*, at the *Majestic Theatre*. The most abject case of jealousy on record could not have been more intense than that of Joe Herring. Mateel, his wife, never gave him sufficient cause either. This story was written by a man who surely knew how men act and feel. The

story is true to life, and teaches a wonderful lesson. I do not believe that you know anything about jealousy from your own experience; but I think Vina is just as jealous as I am, and it might be the proper thing for you to forsake us both. You have said you would never marry an old maid, and I never would have let you know how dear you are to me if you had not asked me to marry you such a short while ago. I have always thought that a man should do all the proposing.

DASH—It is not necessary for you to get so near to an apology. All women do most of the proposing; actions are more forcible and convincing than words. Most all women make their husbands believe that they never proposed. The language of nature has but few words, and in case of sex love, there is no need of words at all; so you need not feel abashed. When we were up in the Capitol dome, your eyes, your voice, and your emotions made a more forcible proposal than any words could have done.—Tell me how Vina feels. I am beginning to feel like I have a complexly complicated situation to dispose of before I can feel right.

LINA—I told you she felt heartbroken; and if I should tell her what you hinted to me, concerning her relations with the minister, I think she would have renewed disgust for you, and I once thought of telling this when my jealousy had a hold on me. I can tell you best by reading you a small portion of her letter. What concerns you and her directly I'll read. This is what she has to say: "My mistakes have been serious. Mr. Blank's demeanor since I requested no further attention from him has caused me no small amount of distress. I was partly persuaded into treating him as I did, by the young man with whom I was attending services, and who has since proved himself to be a scoundrel. This young man was passing himself as a single man, and there was a detective here since he left, with a warrant for his arrest. He left a wife and child in Virginia. He professed to be an evangelist, and was nice-appearing. Mr. Blank was not as gallant and

polished in manners as I once took him to be; he is better at heart than most men. Yes, I can say more: he is better at heart than any man I know. And after all, it is so much better to be good than to make a profession of being a Christian. You see I have made the most serious mistake of my life, and I have resolved to seek him in person and ask his forgiveness. When he left recently he did not tell anyone except Mr. B., a man who lives on one of his farms, where he was going; so I do not know where a letter would reach him. Mr. B. said he was going to Topeka before he returned, so I beg you, my dear good Aunt, to intercede for me if you see him before I do. I am so worried that I am half sick all the time. I may have to give up my school; I can easily get a young man in the neighborhood to finish the term."

DASH—I see an honorable way out of this unfortunate situation, but I am not going to be in a hurry to accept it, for I have done no wrong and she has been foolish and frisky. Some girls never get over being giddy, and I propose to let her have time to develop into a better and more thoughtful woman. I've had my mind made up for some time to take a trip to Los Angeles, California; and I am going to avoid meeting her till I come back from there. She is anxious to come to this place and be with you, and if you will get her to read those books, *Age of Reason*, by Tom Paine, and the *Riddle of the Universe*, by Ernest Haeckel, and read them yourself, I'll await patiently for developments. I would like to travel a year and be among strangers all the time, and see what would be the effects on my social, moral, and political convictions. I must confess that conclusions on many important subjects are changing. I have done so long without a companion, and I read of so many divorces, and general mix-ups in married life, that I am contented in waiting a while longer. I never could get even one woman whom I wanted, entirely in the notion of marrying me; now that I have two, it seems that

my future is going to be quite interesting. I am not sure that I am worthy of either one of them ; so it is on their behalf as well as my own that I intend to procrastinate. I am not going to take this course with any feeling of resentment toward your niece, and it is only fair to tell you that I have more confidence in you than I have in her ; but to marry you now, even though she has rejected me, I would be taking a risk with the courts, which I do not care to assume. What do you think about it?

LINA—Oh, Dash, I'm sick! I'm afraid I am not going to be able to go out tonight ; anyhow, I would rather stay here and talk to you than to go to that Suffrage doings at the State-house. As to what I think about your course, it would take a whole volume to tell. I am thankful you are so candid in telling me your thoughts. Oh, what a blessing it is to have a real genuine friend in whom we can trust every thought that enters the brain. I am undecided whether you are right or wrong, and I am in a position in this matter, where it will be very hard for me to be as generous as I ought to be. A concession from you on one or two points of my procedure, or rather an opinion from you, would make my counsel to Lina much easier to give.

DASH—Anything I can grant to you in opinion I shall be glad to give ; and anything I can yield within the bounds of honor, I shall be glad to accede. I love you both.

LINA—It is so hard for me to tell you the flashes of thought and questionable conclusions which are making my head ache. Would it be right for me to lead Vina into a new courtship and get her married to some nice young man?

DASH—"Everything is fair in war," some one has said ; but it is doubtful if everything and anything are justifiable in campaigns of this kind. However, the end might justify the means, for it might lead her into a first-class match, a mating in which she would enjoy her religion.

LINA—Then you would not think it wrong if I did not get her to read those books?

DASH—It might be doing her an injustice in the light of a selfish motive on your behalf.

LINA—That is true. I shall do right, and let the consequences be what they may. But oh, Dash, I dread to think of your going so far away and staying so long; I know that I shall be more lonesome, nervous and distressed after you leave than I have ever been. You may not realize how hard it is for me to give you up. I am so willing now to trust you in every way that a woman can trust a man. I know you are in the course of a development that will make you as good as it is possible for a man to be.

DASH—Have you any doubt in your mind of it being possible for a man to be as good as a woman?

LINA—No. They are essentially the same, subject to the same influences, and apt to change. Let us go to the Auditorium to the Scoville revivals.

DASH—Do you think I am subject to change on topics which might be introduced by an evangelist?

LINA—You might be benefitted, even if you were not changed in conviction. You might get some new points in how a noted Chicago man conducts a modern revival.

DASH—We will attend that place soon. I would rather go to the Grand, tonight. It will be better for you, I think.

LINA—Very well; we will go at once.

## XVI.

### THE LAST MESSAGE.

When I left you in Topeka last month I determined to give at the first opportunity my appreciation of the modern gospel services at the Auditorium. The way the Rev. Mr. Rockwell conducted the song service was about the best display of "monkey-shines" that I ever saw. Of course it was entertaining to see and hear how he got that vast audience to repeat choruses and whistle them while he jumped up and down and clapped his hands just like a juvenile. Getting the audience to read those old senseless passages in concert just like so many little monkeys trying to imitate each other was very amusing. When the Rev. Mr. Scoville asked the Christians to hold up their hands, it was about as pitiable as it was laughable to see how so many would hold their hands almost up to their shoulders and look sheepish and timid like a lot of children who were making a pretense of something of which they were ashamed.

Then the little stupid senseless prayers, all so much alike, and so familiar to everybody, that the stories of old Mother Goose would be about as appropriate for an intelligent audience to be enthused over. Yet it was all funny enough for a change, and it was really enjoyable, in much the same sense that a circus is enjoyable.

"All the powers of the earth are in me" was about as wild a text as the preacher could find, and about as untruthful as the lips of man could get between them. The extravagant application of the powers which they have peddled to the ignorant, superstitious and credulous people no longer compete with the achievements of science. There are just as lofty ideals of morality seeking

assertion and acceptance by the scientists as there are by these preachers; and those pathetic stories which are related to get the boys and girls to join the church, appeal to the emotions, and are not ethical moral reasons for being good.

Maybe some day I'll have to back down from all I have said about religion, but I have uttered the truth as I see it.

There is a political octopus at Girard that I am afraid of, and I am going to put everything I have into interest-bearing funds and go to Mexico or near its border, and wait for developments. When the revolutionary cloud passes I'll try the Montezumas, that place of perpetual spring. If I can get hold of several haciendas, and get Uncle Sam to back me in my possessions, I'll come back and live in Topeka and draw on Mexico instead of my native land.

President Taft has backed down, thrown down the bars to Warren, Wayland, and the Debs. They will proceed to denounce private ownerships in lands with renewed vigor. "These men ought to all be in jail, or deported to Hades" is what I heard a prominent Topeka man say, but no power on earth can hinder them very many more years from convincing the majority of voters that every man should have all that he earns, and that no man should have more than he earns.

A new dispensation of the holdings of the natural resources of the country is sure to come, and if a fellow desires to live without work he must own lands and mortgages or deposit everything he has in U. S. postal banks, and be contented with the small interest allowed, or live on the principal.

You and Vina will have ample time to adjust the predicament satisfactorily, I hope. In the mean time we will study Socialism, religion, and science; and I hereby postpone marriage till 1913. If there is enough superstition about either of you to object to the 13th year and the 13th day of some month in that year, I am willing to postpone the matter indefinitely.

The Socialists are aiming to have the government receive all the money deposits. Next thing they will be demanding that no citizen shall be allowed to collect interest or money; and that the government shall be the only recipient of interest, and will demand that all notes and bonds be deposited with the government, and the owners allowed nothing but the principal.

The future looks dark for a good fellow who don't like to work. How in the name of Jesus are we good fellows to live?

### Happiness.

Happiness comes from being good, healthy, and well situated; and there are as many degrees of happiness as there are numbers of human beings. Each person gets it according to his disposition, and according to his being good, healthy, and well situated.

Some people can never be very happy, because they were evolved under unfavorable circumstances, over which of course they had no control. Here is where heredity plays havoc with the happiness of all of us, more or less. Persons born with abnormal appetites and desires cannot be very happy, and such are apt to be more miserable than happy. How very essential, then, that children should be well born. Being well born, then improperly instructed, leads to misery just as surely as being poorly born; so the social environments have a great deal to do with happiness as well as usefulness. Here is where prohibition is going to do service for the well-born as well as those poorly born.

The whole human race is tainted with inherent evils, the worst of which is intemperance, in eating, drinking, and self-indulgence. To over-indulge the sensuous as well as the sensual desires hampers both health and happiness.

Reading emotional books frequently tends to the ruin of the eyes, the same as nibbling at candies and nuts to accommodate the sensuous pleasure of taste brings stomach disorders.

The second worst inherent evil is the universal use of tobacco. It does not only contribute to the gratification of sensuous pleasure, but to a morbid condition of the brain; especially is this so among children. This tobacco habit has got the same hold upon the American people that opium has on the Chinese. The fact that the women of this country do not yet use tobacco to any extent, makes a hopeful chance that sometime we may be able to place the same restriction on the manufacture and sale of tobacco that we now place upon intoxicating liquors. Blessed be the day, for it will contribute much happiness. Some children—and the writer was one of them—like the taste and influence of tobacco from their infancy.

Being good branches out into so many kinds of human effort that it is necessary to consider all kinds of industries. However, there are some general rules of moral conduct, all of which ought to be observed in every vocation. They are listed as follows: Be good by being sociable, honest, and diligent; cheerful, hopeful, and generous, aiming to be helpful to the community at large as well as to each individual with whom you associate, but at the same time never violating your own rights, thereby reducing your own possibilities for doing good and being good. Here is where we must not take an erroneous view of self-sacrifice. To take too great a risk of destroying the health and safety of ourselves is recklessness, the evils of which are only a little more excusable than attempting to do nothing.

Of course there are times and occasions when we do not have time to deliberate, when the impulse of the moment demands immediate action. In such cases the brave, unselfish being will act rashly and excite the condemnation of those who mean well, but who are not liberal enough to be really good.

To gain the greatest happiness for ourselves and those who act, necessarily, in opposition to us, we have to consider error and evil, both of which influence society to cease making progress.

The private homes are where the principles of happiness begin to influence the careers of all. Then the schools with additional intellectual help aid us to where we are supposed to be qualified for good citizens. After this the legislative enactments are most influential in shaping our material welfare.

It will be noticed that the church is not considered a factor in producing happiness and extending the welfare of a country. The church as an entertainer is not equal to the theater, and the best dramas in our theaters have more moral worth and more influence for happiness than the best sermons. To maintain this statement it will be necessary to refer to it in the comments on the homes, the schools, and the legislatures.

In an intellectual contest with Ingersoll, a noted D. D. once said: "Give us something equal to our church codes for producing happiness before you knock the crutches from under us." It is the aim of this last message to show that we have the structural ground-work, in the homes, the schools and the legislatures, to produce all the happiness that can be attained.

When a father and mother are well mated they will go through all the trials which marriage produces, with a sustaining sympathy in which all their children will share. In the best homes, where truth and honesty prevail instead of deception and doubt, there is where the greatest happiness is enjoyed.

A little child who listens to a family prayer and sees no good evidence of its being answered, and commences to doubt a religion which requires it, soon becomes aware of all the deceptions which are practiced to make him fear God and the devil. He becomes rebellious; and trouble instead of happiness is the result of his religious teaching. The home circles which are most harmonious are those in which there is no pretense of communication with God by prayer; in these homes the children like books, music, games, and play and romp with one another. They do not waste their affection on a tyrannical God whom Christians say must

be regarded with "fear and trembling." Such people recognize that the unyielding laws of nature must be learned and obeyed, and that their happiness depends on conforming to those laws, and by treating each other kindly.

They learn to study each other's rights and duties, and do not waste time on catechisms and decalogues. Their aspirations are to do something like Jefferson, Lincoln, and Edison, and they become happy in the pursuit of these aspirations. It is plain that the civil laws of the country should be so adjusted that homes would be easy to acquire; so that every industrious family could become so situated that they might get the highest degree of happiness.

The public schools qualify the students in a general way, to take up the various vocations, equipped with methodical intelligence which leads the way to success and happiness.

There is no class of citizens so beneficial to civilization as the school teachers, and we seldom see a praying school teacher who is a successful instructor.

It is not possible for a teacher to train scholars into practicing good habits, without the aid of parents. If a child will not accept good habits and practice them at home, his case is almost hopeless. Even when the teacher gets such a child to practice good discipline at school, the home influence will destroy the good effects of school discipline between the terms of school.

Parents sometimes say the teacher does not do his duty because he does not teach their children to be good and have manners. The teachers fill their mission if they give good text-book instruction and make the children obey during school hours. In school there is a great deal of enjoyment for those children who are well born and have good homes. So, "There is no place like home."

Laws, to encourage the making of good homes, are needed more than anything. The morality of the people would be greatly

improved if it were easier for the people to get good comfortable homes, and following this they would attain a higher degree of happiness.

The object of a social compact should not be so arranged that immense fortunes are accumulated by the minority of the citizens while the majority struggle all their lives and never gain the comforts and leisure commensurate with the increased facilities of these times.

Large estates and vast fortunes will surely be levied upon to relieve the poverty of the worthy poor; levied upon in such a way that it will amount to confiscation of all above what is needed for the comfort and lifetime maintenance of those families now enjoying such fortunes. Not in any case would it be right to take from the rich and give to the poor, but the State will intercede in such a way and under such regulations that the worthy poor may earn more abundantly than they have been able to do in the past; under such regulations that lucrative employment will always be in readiness for those who need employment, and who have not the means to employ themselves. It is beastly inhuman for the State to allow any citizen to control wealth which he has not earned, while other citizens are forced into idleness as a result of such private control. Just how and where to begin such regulations is now beginning to agitate the public conscience. This is in evidence by the utility bills so much discussed in all the State and National legislatures. Happiness for the whole population is the true mission of State government, and under this mission the State cannot afford, under the plea of vested rights, to allow a corporation or a wealthy citizen to pauperize industrious citizens by monopolizing land, cornering products, or selfishly manipulating public utilities.

There is a way to get at land values, as well as railroad values, and by law let a land monopolist know that charging more rent than a legal rate of interest on the cost of improvements would

amount to, is equivalent to a railroad increasing freight rates to pay a legal rate of interest on a sum higher than the physical valuation. If it is right to make the railroads act within the bounds of justice, it is right to make landlords act within the bounds of justice. This is the only way to make homes cheap enough to enable the working people to get the maximum happiness. It is the right way to populate the country with a happy, healthy, patriotic people; it is the right way to get more of the people back to the soil; and it would in no way hinder those who farm their own land. It provides a way for people to get all they earn and do their own managing, which is much better than a system of socialism, for the rivalry and individualism are maintained. This, with a graduated system of land-tax assessment, would soon divide the large farms into smaller possessions, and put each farm to its full capacity of production.

"You twentieth century fool! You cruel crank of a criminal age! You are a blind theorist with no regard for the property which we have inherited from our parents! You would destroy land values and impoverish our city homes; we could no longer have fixed incomes which our parents provided for us! You are aiming to defeat us in our attempt to make a good old English nobility. You ought to be tarred and feathered and put astride of a log and started over the Niagara Falls."

Oh, these awful shades! They get hold of my pencil and spread this aristocratic abuse all over a nicely arranged argument. These same shades are skillful dealers in real estate, and get the laboring people to trust them absolutely, then they take the earnings of the poor, systematically, by a legal process of interest on notes and bonds, rents, installment payments, etc. At Christmas-time these shades give liberally to the Good Fellows' fund, and sometimes give as high as 10c. per kid, to the extent of three kids.

These are the shadiest shades known in the economic system. They have strong convictions; believe in unlimited private owner-

ships of land ; believe their children should be provided with fixed incomes of \$100,000 per each child, as an emergency endowment to help get a foreign fakir to avoid celibacy.

Every thing and every person is subject to change. Whatever changes of belief we have, we should acknowledge them freely ; we will then enjoy a greater degree of happiness.

### Prosperity.

Some think, when they get rich, that they are prosperous. Holding notes, mortgages, bonds, and owning lands, houses and railroads, is prosperity from only one view, the view of selfishness. If the person, owning all these, is narrow-minded, grasping at every chance to get more, and having no thought as to whether he is oppressing others, he is not prosperous from a worthy point of view. If he does not feel generous enough to analyze his methods to see if he is outraging the rights of others, he is not prosperous from a moral point of view ; and if he never gives his legal rights, which make the ownership of all his property possible by State protection, due consideration, with a view to ascertain whether he is getting wealth for which he does not give anything in return, then he is criminally prosperous.

To be prosperous in a good sense of the term it is necessary to be occupied with the pursuit of some good attainment, and to have plenty of worldly wealth to prosecute that pursuit with vigor. So many who have attained the worldly goods have no wealth of intellect to interest them and can find no pleasure or contentment outside the narrow path of economy and close application.

If one does not investigate his legal rights and ascertain whether they are founded on the principles of justice to all mankind, he is prosperous from a criminal point of view.

If he goes on accumulating without caring anything about the moral status of his methods and legal rights, and gets generous

enough to donate to schools and libraries, hospitals, and benevolent institutions, he becomes a modern tyrant, taking the earnings of a worthy working class and using his unearned wealth to pose as a benefactor.

The most prosperous person from an ethical point of view is the one who can do the most good and be the most happy while he is doing it. Unfortunately these kinds of persons are generally imposed upon by those who get a morbid gratification by scheming to appropriate the productions of the kind, generous, happy persons. And there are others so sensitive and have such deep, sympathetic natures that they are never very happy, because of the suffering and injustice throughout all nature. The thought of the killing of the chicken which so trustingly runs up to the feet of the farmer, gives this sensitive being a shock; and the thought of every living, moving thing being unmercifully devoured by something brutal and ravenous; and man at the top of the brutal creation preying upon those unable to defend themselves, not eating their flesh and picking their bones as in the case of the chicken dinner, but by means of unjust laws appropriating the products of their labor, gives the thoughtful, sensitive persons grief.

Usurious interest on money, exorbitant rent on houses and lands, and high salaries to officials, all these are subjects which disturb the peace of mind of some good sensitive people, and about the only real contentment they get is striving to make better conditions. They have worthy natures, and we should try to make them happy by helping them, by giving them aid in their efforts. These kind people do not feel prosperous unless all mankind is prosperous. There are some of this kind of persons among the heirs of the immensely rich; but living as they do in some suburban home and employing agents to collect their annuities, their sensitive natures do not have a chance to develop into good efforts; their minds too are entertained with soft, slushy sentimental

literature, when they are not entertained with high fashionable society; so they are victims of their surroundings and cannot be blamed.

The only way to be really happy is to know how to contend with the things that make you miserable. Maybe the captains of industry feel miserable when they are not exploiting and oppressing the laborers, or maybe they see only good in doing what the laws sanction; in either case they are not so much to be blamed as those who meekly submit.

If the laboring class had not the means at hand to better their condition, we could have more sympathy for them. But they are so ignorant and superstitious, so devoted to their various religious beliefs, so thoroughly deceived with divine providence, that they are incapable of knowing how to proceed. Our full sympathy goes out to those who do know how to proceed, and because these cannot get the concerted action of the ignorant to get relief through legislation, we should extend help.

The tyranny of taxation is just beginning to get a good hold on the farms of Kansas, and the office-holders, the bankers, the real estate dealers, the merchants, and all those who are trying to build fine cities, these are all in for it; so you fellows who are digging in the soil can prepare to dig harder than ever. It is only necessary to attend the legislature and observe closely, to understand the drift of legislation. The public schools of the State are all right, and the legislation to get good roads is all right, but nearly everything else that is being done is in favor of the fellows who don't live on the farms. You farmers may have some hard lessons given you in the next few years: you may learn that the Agricultural College is mostly hog-tail serum and high-salaried officials who want more salaries. The agricultural colleges should be self-supporting after the plants are established. The prosperity you hear so much about is not going to touch taxpayers.

## Consecration.

It would be hard to get more foolishness and deception into a word than is contained in consecration. To be consecrated is to be an adept in fooling the people with piety. There is nothing about consecration that has any practical value for those who toil to feed, clothe, shelter, entertain and educate the really good people. Consecration was created by old-time schemers who desired to formulate a systemized business of humbugging the ignorant into a business of God-worship; and they have been successful in applying the scheme. To the schemers it is a very practical word, and being connected with pious pomp, the credulous believer thinks a bishop has attained a kind of exalted goodness which qualifies him to live in ease and comfort by the contributions which hard-working, honest, though ignorant, good people make to the church. A diocese is an ecclesiastical division where the spoils are computed and divided among so many men who are in the useless God-business of saving souls. What humbuggery! What a complicated system of superstitious plunder! If all the money which is wasted on these bishops, prelates, pontiffs, priests and popes, were used in our public schools to teach the children how to be good according to ethics, what a vast improvement it would bring to our civilization.

To get the most happiness out of life we must learn to avoid the evils and errors which we have inherited from less enlightened ages. Till we put aside these old systems of religion which were the direct causes of nearly all the wars, our present civilization is in danger. It would never be wise to legislate against them because of the zeal and ignorance upon which they were founded; but to discourage them by the persuasive means of good books is a privilege the value of which it is hard to estimate.

The greatest benefactors of this age will be those who succeed in uniting the people in the practice of being good on an ethical

system based on the laws of nature. Such a system is now well understood by our best school teachers. When this knowledge enters every home and eradicates the God-loving, God-fearing and God-menacing trickery practiced by preachers, then we may soon attain the greatest degree of happiness; then we may see more attention given to making pleasant homes; then we may all see how unnecessary it is to build big churches in which to love and worship God; then we may all see that the easiest and best way to be good is to love one another, and go to the parks, baseball games and theaters on Sunday; then we may see that one way to be good is to enjoy ourselves at any pleasure that will not injure us or hinder the enjoyment of others; until then we must do the best we can and be patient with those who have not a chance to be very good; till then we must remember that some well-meaning people have believed in Providence and still believe in prayer, even though this same Providence would completely destroy a church with a cyclone; till then we must set a good example by refraining from the use of ugly language, and other evidences which show that we are not so good but what we could be a little better.

In the mean time, get busy at something which will benefit yourselves, and help you to improve yourselves in time to be careful of others. Be as good as you can, as often as you can, whenever you can, and yet be careful not to go to such an excess in being good as to injure yourselves; but whatever you do, remember you can be as good as any bishop who ever lived, and yet not be consecrated. To get consecrated one has to learn a whole lot of ecclesiastical trash of no use whatever to modern morality.

D. D.'s of every description and kind have a better chance to be good than some fellows who get into the penitentiary; they have a system (and they inherited it, too) which enables them to live by the works of those who have more faith than good sense. This helps them to keep themselves from being so bad as to get

entangled in the civil laws ; this helps them to pose as being very good, and when men are well dressed, smooth shaved, clean and fat, they can appear to be good even though they do not earn any of the good things they get. Remember, a good appearance is largely a matter of good clothes, good food, and a good chance to read, rest, and get intelligent ; and some are so constituted that they never question the possibility of a vocation being of no use to humanity ; so some of these D. D.'s may act in good faith and really believe themselves to be very good, when in fact they are a useless burden on society.

Since the sciences of chemistry, electricity, surgery, and the theory of evolution, have got a hold on the intelligence of most of men, theology wriggles and twists its doctrines to make it appear that morality is based on the God-business ; but when we see families who do not have anything to do with the God-business, bring up some of the best and most useful men that we know, then we see morality is purely a matter of ethics ; consequently such words as God, devil, sin, consecration, Holy Ghost, providence, prayer, etc., do not have any place in the vocabulary of morality. Some of the best men who ever lived never prayed, or if they did they were ashamed of it afterwards. What stupendous egotism a man attaches to himself when he talks to the power that rules the universe (Nature and her laws), then pretends to get an answer. It was both pitiful and laughable to see Scoville & Co. performing the Salvation drama at the Auditorium in Topeka. Rockwell, the music manager, would walk the stage, paw the air, clap his hands, and give the word "Go!" (begin) just like is sometimes done at a foot-race.

Then he would have the chorus of some new song repeated time after time ; then he would have the men whistle it, and cheer them with "fine!" "fine!" "splendid!" After this, three or four of the ministers would coax God with little 2x4 prayers, so void of intelligent application to nature's laws that it seemed just like

little children talking to their toys. When we contemplate these performances seriously, we do not wonder that some men have not sense enough to provide comfortable homes ; we do not wonder why some do not know how to be good enough to be happy.

When people can be fooled into participating in such performances, how easy it must be for them to indulge in the vices which contaminate the large cities! What easy victims they must be for the crafty, treacherous manipulators of vice and cruelty! How unfortunate that they have not some better way of exercising the emotional part of their natures! No doubt most of these were so poor and have such a hard time in the battle for life, that they have never had time to develop their reasoning faculties. Likely, too, some were so rich and self-indulgent that their morbid natures kept them from being good and decent, and they felt the need of some kind of a change. Poor people! They are more to be pitied than censured.

We wonder if there is enough of this kind to turn civilization backward and undo all that the great men of scientific research have given us. This thought would be alarming if it were not for the fact that our legislatures are almost independent of church influence.

This blighting influence of the church has an alarming hold on the schools, but the legislative powers may prevent any further union of church and state.

There are many preachers who would like to see civil laws which would enforce people to attend church and drink some of the blood of Jesus and chew his flesh—cannibal worship! These D. D.'s would like to prepare a dipping-tank behind a curtain and dip every man, woman and child in Topeka, then sing "whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow." They would like to have a "fountain filled with blood" to cleanse sinners, and have Jesus or some of his emissaries to turn water into wine in violation of our prohibitory amendment.

"Atheist!!! Sinner!! desecrator! evolutionist! blasphemer! defamer! God in his wrath will put you in hell, and fire and brimstone will torture you throughout eternity." Wow! O these shades; how they do make a truth-seeker side-step!

### Old-age Pensions.

The prosy reality of old age none can avoid; and when we think of the false, optimistic doctrine that a merciful God is making a record of all we do, we sometimes dwell upon God's record; in which thousands were drowned in floods; pestilences of all kinds sweep millions from the face of the earth; famines depopulating some countries to the horrible extent of half the inhabitants, whose upturned eyes in trusting prayer beg for mercy; cruel wars where both combatants pray to the same Christ and the same God, thanking him for his merciful protection; one branch of the church at enmity with another branch, calling its members dupes as the Reverend Scoville did, February 27th, at the Auditorium in Topeka; and the industrial conditions in many countries where the rich starve the laboring people, both sides teaching the mercifulness and wisdom of God. This is enough to disgust such scientists as Edison with the foolishness and weakness of his fellow human beings.

The laws of nature which govern the universe are as cruel to man as they are good, and it is only as he learns to protect himself and guide these laws into his submission by the works of such men as the scientist are that we are safe from complete annihilation.

Old age needs comfort and protection from the cruel laws of nature and the inhuman civil laws of man. Much has already been done in throwing light on this subject. The frugal, thoughtful man who has not wasted his time and earnings has provided himself with a sufficiency, and the government now having pro-

vided a Postal Banking system in which deposits are as safe as the government can make them, makes old age secure against privation and want; but this security depends on the frugality of the individual, who should strive to accumulate property enough to make a sufficient deposit with the government, when he gets too old to do active work, and thus avoid being a burden on the public as a pensioner.

To pension those having sufficient means to support themselves would be wrong, which would make a lot of extravagance as well as be a great hardship on taxpayers; and to pension those like we do retired judges and generals, all of whom are paid so liberally that they should in most cases have provided for old age, is to encourage extravagance and destroy frugality as well as to place a burden on taxpayers, most of whom are forced to practice economy all their lives. Anyone who has plenty in his own rights, and desires a pension, is more degraded than a pauper who has become a public charge through misfortune; and anyone who becomes a public charge by his own recklessness ought to be ashamed to apply for a pension. Sometimes unavoidable misfortunes overtake very worthy people in all vocations. Upon these there ought to be a consideration extended; but even here there are many who would resort to fraud; so the public pension question is fraught with great dangers.

A man who would oppose giving an old soldier, who is in need, a pension, such a man is not a good citizen, for the soldiers risk their lives before shot and shell.

If our industrial system were so arranged that every careful person would have a good opportunity to provide for old age, a pension system would be unnecessary; while a liberal pauper fund might have a good influence on society, but it should be so arranged that those who live reckless lives would feel disgraced by having to apply for it. Nothing would be more harmful to a government than a pension law for those (like the judges of the

higher courts, who are paid such high salaries and put in so little time at their work) who have good opportunities to provide for old age. To pension the school teachers who become disabled by old age would be much more worthy, for these struggle under severe competition, from which cause their wages are meagre compared with the salaries of judges, who get their offices through political patronage. It does seem that we are nearing a time when those who work to feed, clothe and entertain the human family should get as much consideration in a helpless old age as those who fight for a salary. Yes, pensions for the industrious old citizens are in the line of a progressive civilization, even if a lone socialist was the first to introduce such a measure in Congress.

### Socialism.

Socialism is a menace to future development. If it ever comes into power (and there is a very great possibility of it in the next ten years), there will not be the necessary rivalry to bring out the best developments of individuals. Ease and comfort are not conducive to the best of achievements. Under present conditions our most useful men have not come from families where wealth and luxury prevailed; and on the other hand, too much poverty and strife in getting the comforts of life are not good for the moral development of a community; so it seems there should be limitations to a man's right for owning and controlling certain kinds of property.

While his right to hold credits for money deposited in National Banks should not be limited, provided the government reserved for itself the exclusive right to receive interest on money, and provided also, that every deposit was guaranteed and subject to being drawn at any time. This would be the means for providing for old age, instead of monopolizing land and other kinds of property when too old to manage it.

All chances by which large fortunes are accumulated for those who do not labor,—through interest on money loaned, land rented and other privileges, are the causes of such a great interest being taken in Socialism. But Socialism goes too far, and says there should be no private ownership in the industries.

Private ownership in land used for homes and the families, is the best provision that is now made to keep a country productive. Economical management is much more apt to prevail if the manager would be the loser in case an industry was not well managed; just as bad management is apt to prevail when the manager is not a loser in case good management is not given.

The Socialists as a self-conscious class mean well, but to argue that private ownership of homes and industries operated with the families' labor, should give way to public ownership, will never be accepted by those who like to manage their own affairs.

We already have the foundation structure in private ownership to build upon in making a better civilization. No doubt there need to be some restrictions and limitations made, but these can all be made by graded systems of taxation, to eliminate all those incomes which come from interest on money and rent on houses and lands.

Socialism is right in maintaining that the State should provide for the employment of everybody who asks for it, and maintaining that the remuneration should be enough so that those who thus seek employment could provide well for their families.

To declare that every man should have all that he earns and that no man should have what he does not earn, is a Socialist declaration; and to the extent that the government can regulate fixed incomes which allow some to get what they do not earn, such regulations will be demanded by all those who believe in being progressive.

### Money.

Out in the desert, away from population, where nature has full sway, a man might have all the money he could carry and it would be worth no more to him than so many pounds of sand, if he had no way of getting to the marts of his fellow-man. All economic thinkers agree that it is a creation of law, and is more powerful than prayer for producing or hindering evil, or *vice versa*, provided you have it where population is abundant.

Making money, getting money and earning money are entirely different, yet so closely related that the ordinary thinker gets these three processes mixed.

As a matter of fact, only organized governments, based on civil law, can make money. Individuals earn money and get money; and in the industries and business, some earn it and don't get it, and a good many get it but do not earn it. How? "Please tell how?" Everybody is interested in this process, especially the preachers and pontiffs, for there must be limitations placed upon this process, or the privilege of living sumptuously without giving anything in return might get analyzed so completely that usurers and tricksters of high and low grade would have to do something beneficial to mankind or starve. Starve! O miserable thought!

Loaning money at a legal rate of interest is the most respectable and safest way of getting it, provided you can get good real-estate security as a basis for loans; and every government ought to have reserved this process of getting money—reserving interest-gathering for itself only, and guarantee deposits from individuals to be absolutely safe. "Horrible thought! outrageous conclusion! incompetent suggestion! parental tendency, destroying competition in the process of getting money without earning it!" \$5000 used to be the price of the best negro slave, and he could earn \$300 annually for his master, but he was apt to die, get kicked by a mule, struck by lightning, or something of the kind. Did anybody

ever hear of a mortgage or a bond, or a promissory note getting kicked by a mule or destroyed by lightning? So anyone can see, even a preacher can see, that buying a \$5000 mortgage is a good deal easier and safer way of getting \$300 annually without earning it. Anybody who— "O such slush! You had better read a good work or two on political economy and learn something of the science of finance, and learn that capital has an accumulative power independent of labor."

It is aggravating to have these shades interfere when a good point is in course of development.

Under present conditions, banks are as necessary as stores or any other business, and under a condition suggested, before those last troublesome shades interfered, they, the present capable bankers, would be necessary to keep and conduct the banks with all the present conveniences, and should be well paid for such high-class mental labor; yet the government, which makes all the money, should be the only recipient of interest on money, and yet each depositor have all the privileges that his *c e* it deposits now give him.

"What a ridiculous, unjust theory! You are the crankiest crank that ever got away from home without a guide! To think that you have the brazen boldness to destroy the system which the venerable Rothschilds have left us, this system which enables us gentlemen to live in the most luxurious style without having any care or anxiety, and still have our fortunes increasing all the time. You villain! You fiend! You imbecile! Go! Get off the earth!"

Golly! Guess it'll be best not to disturb these shades any more. The officers of the law respond to the call of these shades quicker than they do to the Holy Ghost shades.

A man who desires to own land enough to employ himself and children, has a praiseworthy ambition. To have a home with all modern equipments, where comfort and leisure are abundant, where music, literature and sociability give ample employment,

creates a peace-loving contentment for parents and gives children a desire to be good, industrious, and respectable.

But a lust after land in this country is a disgraceful, crime-producing cause, of which nice city people are uninformed.

In western Kansas there is one of these land-crazy farmers, who has fourteen quarter-sections of land and who is just as anxious to get another quarter-section as he was the first one. He has made slaves of his wife and children. His intellectuality has narrowed down to getting money without giving an equivalent to his family or society. Every day is burdensome with scrimping, toiling, and worry; and his tenants are bleary-eyed weaklings who live the same kind of a life. These renters have to live as they do; for the landlord has the law in his favor to collect exorbitant rents. This land-tenure system is one of the blighting influences which make country life so disagreeable and drives the young people to the overcrowded cities. The real-estate men in their fine automobiles take strangers through this locality and tell of the wonderful success of this landlord, and issue glowing circulars telling of the wonderful crops and induce the strangers to invest at a price about double what the land is worth. Whenever these shrewd real-estate men sell a quarter-section for the aforesaid owner they divide the spoils and talk over the wonderful enterprise; then immediately the old monopolizer hunts up some fellow who has been a victim in this poverty-producing scheme some years ago, and buys twice as much land as the slick real-estate men sold.

Now if the governor and bank commissioner are going to get after the blue-sky schemes of getting money, they might find a job out there; and if the railroads are going to be compelled to show figures for reckoning a physical valuation, why would it not be right to apply the same process to the land dealers?

"It will never do to talk such foolishness publicly. The business interests forbid it. The selling prices of land would decrease, and we could not make such high assessments in getting out our

county tax lists. We want to keep these assessments up, so all the salaries can be raised. We men who manage the official work of county and State need big automobiles. We can loan money to the farmers at 6 per cent. and take 2 per cent. out of the face of the loan and thus get 8 per cent., defeating the law which regulates the legal rate of interest.

"You see we have the advantage of the railroads; if they should try to collect a commission on rates, as we do on loans, the attorney-general would get onto the job and there would be something doing. When we make a loan to a farmer who is hitched so short that he can't kick, it only takes a few strokes of the pen to take \$120 out of \$1000 on five years' time. Of course the farmer gets only \$880 and pays a 6 per cent. interest on \$1000; thus we manage to keep the farmers poor so they will have to borrow money. We are Sages, and it is ungenteel for you to call us shades. We have a *Kansas Banker*, a publication especially for bankers. It does not circulate only with the bankers and money-loaners. It will see to it that no legislation is enacted that will interfere with the business interests. You are just a little wrong in the head. There is no use to be wasting sympathy for a lot of Rubes."

It seems like the Shades are going to be Sunny Jims, but it will be nearer right to call them Shady Sages. They are wise, no doubt, and not bothered with compunction; besides, it is possible that they believe in the Christian plan of salvation, which is, to tell it all to Jesus, then be prayerful and trust to Providence. Anyhow, getting money without earning it is not confined to judges, most of whom do not hold court more than one-third of the time, and nearly all of whom are getting their salaries raised; in addition to this they will get retired on pensions. Here are the sages and shades, and they look so much alike it is hard to tell tother from which!

"We will admit that the constitution provides that a man may act according to the dictates of his conscience, but when he seems

to have no conscience and advocates a scheme that will destroy incomes which are not based on human effort, but on property rights, then it is time to suppress such schemes. The laborers have all the advantages that they can assimilate; to allow them anything more than a living would injure them, for they would use it up in riotous living and unfit themselves for the good service which they now give; besides, we are especially made by God, through divine providence, to rule over those less intellectual. The divine rights of kings, wherever they can sustain them, are akin to the divine rights of aristocrats which the sacred rights of property have established, and to limit the amount of property a man controls, by a graded system of taxation, or to make the government the only recipient of interest on money, would interfere with the Business Interests."

There are so many Shades in the elucidations which I have deliberated upon, in trying to harmonize my convictions with yours and Vina's, that I have concluded to travel two years and see just what other civilizations are in other countries. In this last message I have retracted many of my former utterances on rights of property. I think I'll be converted to all your economic views, and if you can reconcile yourself to my ethical views of morality which are in opposition to Christianity, there is a chance for a wedding, the ceremony to be performed by a probate judge, provided I do not become a Christian.

The sequel to this much-mixed episode being due in 1913. A. D., there is time for prayer to do wonders if there is anything in prayer.

It is awful to live in a worldly doubt and uncertainty, but it is better than not to have lived at all. According to Rev. Scoville, I am convicted of an unpardonable sin; however, if I should say I believed what I do not believe, I would be a liar and a hypocrite.

No man can help what he believes, but he can avoid being a hypocrite.

I am now bidding you both GOOD-BY! I shall be in Topeka in 1913 if there is no "preventing (?) Providence," and am trusting to Dodd Gaston to give bachelors' consolation. If you succeed in getting Vina Vintage married to some good preacher, I shall be willing to do like Dodd Gaston intends to do.

DASH BLANK.

March 20th, 1911.







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